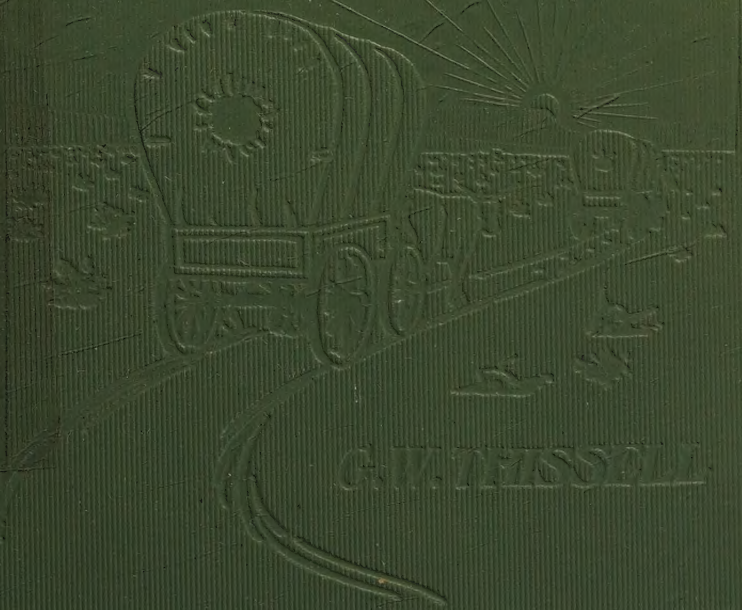
CROSSING THE PLAINS IN '49



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G. W. THISSELL

Crossing the Plains in '49

By G. W. THISSELL

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I dedicate this little work to my beloved wife who shared my hardships and trials in a pioneer's life.

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INTRODUCTION.

It is no light undertaking to prepare a story adequately describing the trip across the plains with an ox team, from the Missouri River to the gold fields of California, in '49-'50.

No pen can describe the trials, the hardships, and privations. One must make the trip to realize the difficulties and dangers encountered. If there are errors, they are such as necessarily occur in writing a story that covers so vast an extent of territory, after so long a period of time.

This story includes the experiences of many pioneers beside that of the writer, who himself crossed the plains twice with an ox team. It is filled with thrilling adventures and hairbreadth escapes from death, as well as many amusing incidents.

Trusting that it will be read with interest, and that the reader will not be disappointed, it is submitted without further comment.

THE AUTHOR.

Contributors.—The author gratefully acknowledges contributions in this book from many old pioneers.

Across the Plains in '49

CROSSING THE PLAINS IN '49

In 1848, when the news of the discovery of gold in California, at Sutter's Mill, by Marshall, reached the Atlantic Coast, many men became wild with excitement.

The wonderful discovery of the placer mines in California unbalanced many minds. The banker, the merchant, the farmer, and the mechanic were seized with the gold fever. The prayers, the tears, the pleading of loved ones, fell on deaf ears.

In 1849 one wild and mad rush was made for the new Eldorado. In the Eastern states many embarked on sailing vessels, bound for California around the Horn, and thousands turned their faces toward the setting sun. What a mass of humanity, wild with excitement, rushing into hardships, dangers, and death! for many never reached the gold fields.

March 16, 1849, in company with Jerry Sheppard, Henry Seamon, William and Ambrose Palmer, I went on board the steamer *Zanesville,* at McConnelsville, Ohio, bound for California. The steamer's destination was St. Louis, Missouri. The hand-shaking, the parting words, "Write often," "God bless you," and we were off for California. The steamer was crowded with men wild with excitement. The gold fever ran high.

In 1849 the cholera swept over the country,

on all the water courses. Every steamer was impregnated with the germs of the disease. We had scarcely steamed a hundred miles when we landed at Louisville, Kentucky, and put off four of our dead, one an old patriarch, James Putman, bound for California. He came from Zanesville, and was the first man who died.

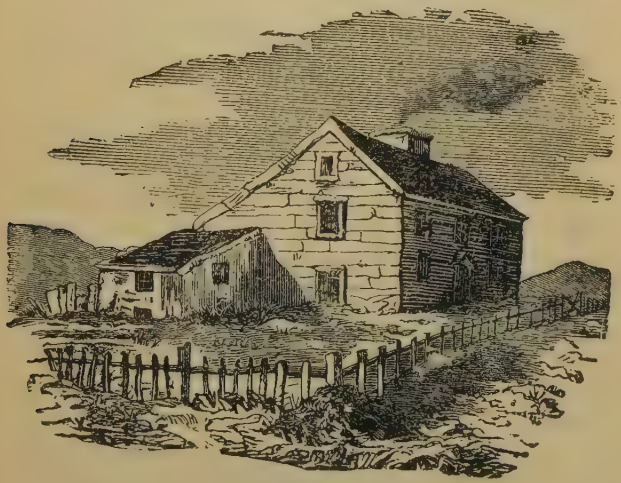
No pen can describe the scenes on board the steamer for the next twenty-four hours. The dead and dying were in every berth. When within twenty miles of St. Louis, in the night we landed and put off nine more dead. All were buried in one large grave. Not even a stake was driven into the ground to mark their last resting-place. At St. Louis what a scene! The wharf was lined with men with the gold fever. After two days' delay, we boarded the steamer *Winfield Scott,* bound for St. Joseph on the Missouri River. The banks were overflowed, and the water had spread over the river bottom for miles. On the high knolls the horses, cattle, sheep, and hogs were huddled together, starving to death.

When we arrived at St. Joseph, a cold March rain was falling in torrents. Our outfit, consisting of one four-horse wagon and provisions for one year, was piled on the wharf in the rain.

In the rush to leave the steamer, one old Dutchman was crowded off the gang-plank

into the river. After much splashing and loud yelling, the old man was saved from a watery grave. The gold fever had left him, however. Wet to the skin and chilled to the bone, the old man exclaimed, "Mine Gott! I vish I vas at home."

At St. Joseph every available camping-



SUTTER'S MILL.

ground was occupied. Men were rushing to and fro, all eager to buy mules, horses, and oxen for the journey. There the emigrants crossed the Missouri River and took the trail for California.

The weather was cold; the throng increased; the excitement ran high. Men became im-

patient, bought feed and extra teams to haul it, crossed the river, and left for the gold fields.

During the weeks of delay, the cholera and winter fever made their appearance, and many sickened and died. Others, weary of the trials and hardships already endured, sold their outfits and returned home.

The day our train crossed the Missouri River, I was sick, and was left behind at St. Joseph. Too proud to return home, I made my way to the interior of Iowa, where I spent nine months working at my trade, that of a carriage maker.

During this time a few of the "forty-niners" returned with immense fortunes. The gold fever broke out anew, and the road was soon lined with emigrants bound for Council Bluffs, which had then become the starting-point for overland California emigrants.

This was the border line of civilization. Here the emigrants crossed the Missouri River. I, too, had the gold fever, and at once set about preparing for the journey. Bob Gardener, Sam and Ike Harris, and myself formed a party and cast our lots together.

Our outfit consisted of four yoke of oxen, one yoke of cows, one saddle horse, and one wooden-axle wagon, with hickory withes for bows, over which was drawn common muslin, to protect us and our provisions from the weather. The wagon bed was made with a false

floor fifteen inches from the bottom of the bed. The space was partitioned off into sections, or rooms, to suit the different articles of food we were to take,—beans, coffee, sugar, tea, pickles, and rice,—provisions enough to last one year. On the false floor were piled our bedding and clothing, while on the wagon bows hung our guns, powder, horn, and shot pouches; for this was before the breech-loading guns were made.

At the hind end of the wagon was a large box, the lid of which hung by hinges. Into this box were piled our cooking utensils and dishes, which consisted of tin plates, tin cups, knives, and forks, enough tinware, pots, kettles, and stew-pans to start a small store—just about three times as many as we needed.

At the end of the coupling-pole hung a large churn, in which we put the milk every morning. The constant shaking of the churn did the churning, and at noon or night we took out a nice lump of butter and a good supply of buttermilk.

With rifle in hand, we bade our loved ones adieu, and began the long and tedious journey of two thousand miles, through the wilderness of unexplored land, inhabited only by wild beasts and savages of the forest.

A CHAPTER FROM MY DIARY.

March 6, 1850.—Left home this morning, Bellefontaine, Iowa. Ground frozen. Drove

fifteen miles, and camped on Little Pedee. Slept in a barn and got very cold.

March 7.—Snowed three inches to-day. Traveled twelve miles. Bought twenty dozen eggs at five cents a dozen. Passed a small store kept by a half-breed. Bought a deck of cards for ten cents, and five gallons of old rye whisky at twenty-five cents a gallon. Gold fever running high. Pulse 140. Drank my first whisky to-day.

March 8.—Rained and hailed to-day. In crossing a slough, our wagon mired down. Had to unload and carry our provisions to solid ground. Bob Gardener got too drunk to do any work. Made ten miles to-day. Camped with an old pioneer, Square Frishey, who came from Ohio to Iowa. Found him a jolly old fellow. He had three fine-looking girls. The old man invited us to spend the evening with him. He got down his violin, and we all had a dance. One of the men brought in a bottle of old rye. This loosened the old man's tongue, limbered up his joints, and made the old violin hum. Ike Harris, to reward the old pioneer's kindness, stole a turkey before we left.

March 9.—Yesterday we overtook two wagons, four men to each wagon. They came from Charleston, Illinois, and we traveled together to-day. While crossing a rapid stream, one wagon capsized. Everything got soaking

wet. The flour and sugar were lost. Killed our first deer to-day. Ike Harris shot it from the wagon. The woods are full of deer.

March 11.—One of the teams got frightened and ran down a steep grade, struck a stump, and one of the wheels broke down. We were twenty miles from a blacksmith shop. Here we were detained two days.

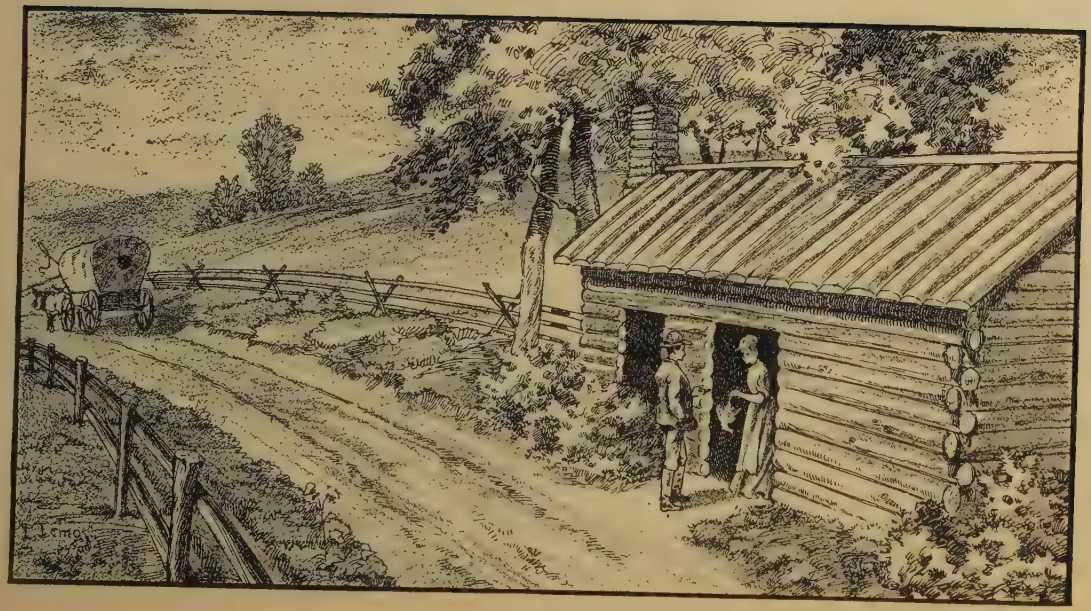
March 14.—Sun rose bright and clear. The boys are running things high. We passed a log cabin to-day. They took in four fine, large turkeys as we came along. The land is hilly and covered with heavy oak and hickory timber, interspersed with walnut. On the creeks the land is rich and fertile. The settlers are ten to twelve miles apart. They live in small log cabins chinked and daubed with mud, and have only one window and door. The roof is held on by large weight poles.

The children are robust and hearty. They live on wild meat, potatoes, cabbage, and turnips.

In the fall they take up a portion of the floor, and bury their potatoes and turnips under the house near the fireplace. This keeps them from freezing. To-day we bought four bushels of potatoes for two dollars.

March 16.—Bob Gardener and Elias Ramey have the measles. Gold fever is going down. Pulse 60.

March 18.—David Bond has the blues.



THE LAST HEN.

Gave his outfit to the company and started home, Bellefontaine, Iowa.

THE LAST HEN.

March 19.—Cold and frosty. Ground frozen. We are now on the frontier of Iowa. Pioneer cabins scarce and far between. The nicknacks we had when we left home are gone: we are down to bread, bacon, and beans. We passed a lonely 12x16 log cabin; I went to the door and found a number of old ladies having an old-fashioned quilting-bee. I asked to buy eggs, butter, and chickens. One old lady informed me they had none to sell. Just then I saw the lady of the house picking one of the fattest old hens I ever saw. I offered her ten cents, the price of a hen, but it was no go. I asked her if she would take twenty-five cents. "Nosiree." Her old man had walked three miles to get that hen for their dinner. The devil whispered to me, "Lie a little." I hated to do it awfully bad, but I wanted that hen. So I told her one of the boys was very sick, and we were fearful he would die, and we thought a little chicken broth would be good for him. All the women quit work and listened to my tale of woe. They wanted to know if he had been sick long, how old he was, where he came from, what his name was. One motherly old soul asked if we had any calomel or cathartic pills. I assured her we had

plenty. One loquacious old lady told the landlady to give me the hen. But no. She was as firm as the rock of Gibraltar. There she stood with the hen grasped tightly in both hands, looking first at her company, then at me.

I was now getting desperate. I told them how the poor boy raved at night, and how he called for his dear old mother and begged for chicken soup. That fetched her. With tears in her eyes she walked up to me and handed me their last hen. I offered to pay her, but, God bless that old soul, she refused to take a cent. My conscience now smote me, and I threw down ten cents and started off to overhaul the wagon. That night we feasted on stewed hen and dumplings, while the old ladies' quilting-bee dined on boiled turnips and bacon.

March 20.—Last night we camped with an old Dutchman. He proved to be too much for all of us. Two of the men tapped his beehive, ate warm honey, and nearly died with the colic. To-day the old Dutchman overtook us with a double-barreled shotgun, and, planting himself in the road in front of the team, demanded one dollar for the honey and two dollars each for stealing it.

He got the money. We had to pay or kill the old tiger. That cooled us all off. We had learned our first lesson.

March 21.—The sun rose from behind a dark bank of clouds, and soon the rain poured

in torrents. To-day we arrived at White Breast. Here a trapper, with a coonskin cap, moccasin shoes, an Indian squaw wife, and three children, ran a ferry. Paid him five dollars to take the wagons across, and we did the work. (The cattle swam all the streams from here to California.)

March 22.—Snowed four inches last night. Wind from the north. Cold as Greenland. Bought one dozen hens for one dollar and thirty dozen eggs for five cents a dozen.

Paid ten cents a bushel for corn, and forty cents for hay to feed four yoke of oxen overnight.

William Jones has the mumps. Three of our oxen were foundered and could go no further, so we traded them for cows. The gold fever runs low. The excitement is wearing off.

March 25.—Arrived at Council Bluffs, the border line of civilization. What a scene! I shall never forget it. Over fifteen hundred men were anxiously waiting to be ferried over the Missouri River. The boat was busy from daylight till dark.

This is the last opportunity to mail a letter. Last night all wrote home. Some wrote to wife and children, others to father and mother. I wrote to the girl I left behind, Asberrene Chambers. (I returned in '51 and married her.)

An amusing incident took place last night.

Old Bob Smith was drunk—too drunk to write. Jerome Swim and the writer volunteered to write for him.

It has been fifty-three years since that night, and yet it creates a smile when I think of it. We wrote by the light of a tallow dip set in an old tin lantern. The wind was blowing and the light flickering. It was impossible to follow the lines.

Time and time again did we start the letter, then he would have to read it, and the big tears would fall upon it. The poor drunken soul did not want his wife to know he was crying, so another sheet must be started. Then there would be something in that that did not suit him. At last we decided there was but one of two things to do, either let him dictate a letter or not write. Following is his letter:—

"Council Bluffs, March 26, 1850.

"Mrs. Robert Smith—*Dear Wife:* Kiss the baby. Council Bluffs, border line, all well. Kiss the baby. Missouri River. Kiss the baby. Had a good time. Last letter. Cross the river. Tell the baby papa, California. Dear wife, all well. Council Bluffs. Tell Johnnie, papa plenty of money California. Kiss the baby."

He was now bellowing like a calf. We sealed the letter and addressed it to Mrs. Robert Smith, Bellefontaine, Iowa, and put it with the letters to be mailed.

In justice to old Bob I must say he was not the only man too drunk to write home that night.

Before crossing the river, the companies organized into a large train for protection from the Indians.

Our train consisted of thirty-six wagons, two hundred and fifty head of work oxen, twenty head of milk cows, which we worked the same as the oxen. We also had thirty head of saddle horses. One man was elected captain (John D. Chambers), who guided every movement of the train. Ours was the "Chambers Train."

Each train took its name from its captain. There was the Walker Train, the Chambers Train, and the Samuel Train. Those trains that passed and repassed each other were known all the way across the plains, and often visited each other at night, and had a dance, for in nearly every train there was a violin.

April 2.—To-day we crossed the Missouri River in a flat-bottomed boat. A large rope was stretched from shore to shore, by which the boat was pulled back and forth, the emigrants doing the work. Nothing but our wagons and provisions were ferried across, one wagon at a time, for which we paid fifteen dollars. Many of our cattle got into the quicksand and were pulled out with ropes.

In swimming the cattle across, Doc Bosier

was drowned. He came from Cole County, Illinois. His body was not recovered.

We drove five miles, and camped on low, rolling hills. It rained and hailed all night. The captain called out all hands on guard to herd the cattle.

From here our route lies up the north side ot Platte River, five hundred miles Fort Laramie.

April 5.—Last night we camped on Elk Horn. This is the first large stream we have crossed since we left the Missouri River.

For three days we have been traveling over high, rolling prairie. But little grass has started, and feed is scarce. On the small streams we find some willow and cottonwood, which we cut down for the cattle to browse on during the night. They eat the limbs as large as a man's finger.

Many elk horns are scattered along this stream. This morning William Booyer killed our first elk.

Last night Jonathan Rich baited his hook with buffalo meat and caught a catfish that was four feet long and weighed fifty pounds.

On this creek we saw the first Indians, the Pawnees. They were all armed with guns, bows, and arrows. They were dressed in buckskin, with moccasin shoes on their feet. They were mounted on Indian ponies, and

rode around the train, taking a good look at us, and then went away over the plains.

Many of the men have the blues. Gold fever running low. Nicknacks are giving out, and we are coming down to plain diet,—saleratus bread, bacon and beans, strong coffee, and sugar.

To-day when we camped for dinner, almost every man was cleaning up his gun. James Reed's gun was accidentally discharged, wounding one of the oxen, breaking its hind leg. The ox was dressed and the meat divided around the train.

HOW FELIX KILLED HIS DEER.

Many of the emigrants never owned a gun until they started across the plains. Felix Stone, to make sure of his game, bought a single-barreled shotgun. It was a muzzle-loader and looked like a beauty. Felix had loaded it for bear, and no bear had been seen. Anxious to kill something, he turned it loose on a deer. There in the willow, not five rods away, stood a fine buck gazing at the intruder. Felix raised his gun, took aim, and pulled the trigger, expecting to blow both eyes out of that deer. There was a roar; Felix and the gun dropped to the ground, and it was evident that the gun had shot at both ends. Felix soon rallied, and so did the deer, for it went staggering off through the brush. Felix felt for

his shot and powder-horns, but he had left them at the camp. Lose that deer. No, siree. Felix dropped his gun and seized the deer by one hind leg. Just then the deer took the other foot from the pit of Felix's stomach. He let loose of the buck and sank to the ground. A thousand stars shot out before his eyes. He seized his gun by the muzzle and struck at the deer. It jumped to one side; the ground received the blows, breaking the gunstock entirely off. Mad?—I should say so. He now sailed in with the barrel. Did he kill the deer?—Of course he did. He broke every bone in his whole body. But poor Felix mourned the loss of that gun all the way across the plains.

April 6.—We entered the Pawnee territory. All day long we have been traveling over a high, rolling prairie, through a drizzling rain; the cold west wind drives it along with terrific force. Every man is chilled to the bone.

It is evident we are leaving civilization far behind. The dim wagon trail has long since disappeared. There is nothing to guide us but the Indian and buffalo trails leading to the Rockies.

Many of the trails were worn in the hard ground and sand rock fifteen to twenty inches deep. The constant tramp, tramp of the Indians and buffaloes had loosened the soil, and the fierce winds had blown it away. In other

places for miles the trails were filled with the drifting sand.

Days and weeks had passed, and nothing had occurred to mar our journey. But, alas, how soon a heavy gloom fell over the entire train! David Long accidentally shot and killed William Brown. No loved one near, no tolling of the church bell, no marble slab to mark his last resting-place. With tender hands we wrapped him in his blankets, and with sorrowing hearts we laid him away. Then, turning from the spot, we resumed our journey, following the Indian and buffalo trails leading to the west.

To-day we experienced the most difficult traveling we have had. We are in the sand-hills. They resemble a thousand eggs set on end. Sand, nothing but sand, as far as the eye can reach.

The wagon tracks are obliterated. The buffalo and Indian trails can not be found. No guide or guide-book. Men on horseback are far in advance of the train looking for water and feed.

As the great luminary of the day sank in the west, we camped by a small pool of stagnant water. Here the buffalo come to drink.

Around this pool or lake the mosquitoes swarm by the millions. I shall never forget those mosquitoes. They were nearly as large as Italian bees, and their bills more than a

THE LOST TRAIL.

half inch long; with these they bored right through our blankets. The cattle could not feed or rest, and the captain called out a double guard.

We all rejoiced when the night wore away. This morning we killed three buffaloes and one calf.

THE LOST TRAIL.

April 10.—All day long we have been traveling over sand-hills covered with sage-brush. No feed for cattle, no water for man or beast. The wind blowing a gale, lifting the sand and whirling it into our eyes, almost blinding both man and beast.

Darkness set in. Men on horseback were far in advance of the train, looking for water and feed. For miles we traveled in the dark. No wagon tracks could be found. We had lost the trail.

Cold bread and jerked buffalo meat were our supper. At break of day we were on the back track, and struck the old trail six miles behind.

THE ONLY COFFIN.

As we scan the pages of the world's history, we find no more solemn scene than to stand by the open grave in the wilderness and see our friend or loved one lowered to his last resting-place, without box or coffin, simply wrapped in a blanket, and to realize that we would

scarcely have left the sacred spot ere the wolves and coyotes would dig for the remains. No matter how deep the grave, nor how many rocks and stones were piled upon it, they would tear it open. It was not an uncommon thing to see a leg or arm dragged from the grave.

We had camped in Paradise Valley. It was an ideal morning in May, but the entire train was in sorrow. Death had entered the camp and claimed Doctor Watts, of Muscatene, Iowa. After four days' illness, the cholera had claimed its victim. Mrs. Watts, heartbroken with grief and sorrow, with her babe in her arms and the tears streaming down her pale cheeks, offered one hundred dollars for lumber with which to make a coffin, or even a rude box, that she might bury her husband secure from the wild beasts. Her grief knew no bounds when she thought of burying her husband without a coffin. Had she owned the world, she would gladly have given it for lumber with which to make one. But we were four hundred miles from the Missouri River, in the wilderness, and not a board could be had. But in her sorrow and bereavement God sent her relief. Joseph Reese and Benjamin Troutman, both of Des Moines, Iowa, tore their wagon bed from the wagon, made a rude coffin, and gave it to her. The entire train gathered around the grave, a hymn was sung, prayer was offered by John D. Chambers, and

WASHINGTON JOHNSON

the body was lowered to its long resting-place, secure from the wild beasts of the forest.

Reese and Troutman made a frame of willow poles, put it on their wagon, piled their provisions and clothing on it, and the train moved on.

Although the writer crossed the plains twice with ox team, this was the only coffin or box in which to bury the dead he saw from the Missouri River to old Hangtown, a distance of two thousand miles.

THE MAN THAT ATE THE HORSE.

The writer is indebted to Washington Johnson for the following narrative of his long and tedious journey to the land of gold.

In 1858, when in his twenty-first year, with only sixty dollars in his pocket, he resolved to seek his fortune in the New Eldorado.

April 2 he left his father's home in Jasper County, Pennsylvania, and made his way to Black Hawk, Iowa. Here he remained a few days, again starting on foot for Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. On his arrival there, his money was all gone. He hired to John Mitchell to drive an ox team to Camp Floyed, in the Great Salt Lake Valley, sixty miles from the city. Mitchell was freighting merchandise to the camp for the government, for which he received twenty-five cents per pound for every-

thing, from a plug of tobacco up to a barrel of whisky.

It was strictly in the contract that the drivers should walk, unless they were sick.

The train consisted of forty-six wagons, with five yoke of oxen to each wagon. Hence there were forty-six ox drivers.

Everything went lovely for a while, but the men soon became cross and ill-natured. The day the butter gave out, two men quarreled over the last morsel, drew their guns, and bloodshed was prevented only by the prompt interference of Johnson and Jake Wilcox.

June 20 the Indians stampeded the cattle and drove off twenty-five head. Tim Hamilton, Jim Roberts, and Johnson followed the Indians into the mountains for ten miles, but failed to overtake them. After three days' delay they started on their slow and tedious journey, many days traveling only eight or ten miles.

After five months' toil and hardship, tired and leg weary, they arrived at Camp Floyed. Jake and Jim Wilcox, William Steele, Robert Rouse, Jim Roberts, Billy Mason, and Washington Johnson formed a company and bought eight Indian ponies for seven dollars and fifty cents apiece, packed them with blankets and provisions, and took the trail to Oregon by the old Fort Hall route, the men walking and leading their horses.

When they had traveled one hundred and sixty miles, they met some trappers, who told them to go no farther; the Indians were hostile, and they could not cross the mountains. They retraced their steps for sixty miles, and took the trail for the gold fields of California, by the way of Los Angeles.

It is impossible for one to have any conception, without actual experience, of the hardships and sufferings they endured from this point in their journey to Los Angeles.

Days and weeks came and passed, and still they plodded on, often without water or food for man or beast.

Weeks lengthened into months. They were tired and weary, provisions almost gone, starvation staring them in the face.

August 15 they fell into company with eight other men with pack horses, who divided their jerked meat and hardtack with them. Soon this supply began to give out, and they were down to half rations. Day by day, meal by meal, they saw their provisions fade away. It was evident they must starve or kill a horse and eat him. Their horses were reduced to mere walking skeletons. Several had died already of starvation. September 1 they selected the fattest horse and killed him. The cook kindled a fire of buffalo chips and prepared a supper, which they heartily relished, though it was well peppered with the drifting

sand. They jerked the meat and picked the bones. On this horse meat they lived twenty-one days, until they reached Los Angeles.

September 3, with a good supply of horse meat, they took hope and pressed on. It was hot and sultry. Jim Wilcox's horse gave out, and they left him for the buzzards.

September 4 and 5 they were in the sage-brush plains. The horses traveled all day without a drop of water.

September 6 they camped on Salt Creek. The water was very brackish. Billy Mason is sick, and they camp here three days.

September 9 all were able to walk. The sand was loose and deep, and they traveled only ten miles.

September 10, cool wind from the west. William Steele killed a jack-rabbit, the first we have killed since we left Camp Floyed.

September 11 and 12, still cool and nice. Sand deep and loose.

September 13, hot and sultry. Water full of alkali. Robert Rouse killed his horse. It was too poor and weak to walk. They cut all the meat off of the bones they could and jerked it.

September 14, still hot. A terrific north wind, which burns like fire. The last horse gave out to-day, and they take their blankets and guns, leaving everything except what they can carry on their backs.

September 15, 16, the heat is intense, and they travel early in the morning and late at night.

September 17, 18, Jim Roberts is sick, and they camp and rest.

September 19 they enter the ninety-mile desert. They start with a good supply of water. In many places the sand is hard, and they make good headway. What words can describe their joy when they first caught sight of Los Angeles?

Twenty-seven hundred miles Johnson had walked. From his father's home in Pennsylvania he had traveled over the barren plains, climbed the steep, snow-clad mountains, crossed the ninety-mile desert of burning sand, with only one gallon of water and jerked horse meat.

After nine months of toil and suffering he arrived in Los Angeles, October 16. Here he gave his blankets for six meals, and pawned his watch for more. The watch is still in pawn where he left it forty-four years ago. He now lives in Pleasant Valley, where he has resided for forty-two years.

THE CAT THAT CROSSED THE PLAINS IN 1850.

On April 2, 1850, James Philly, wife, and three children, two boys and one girl, left West Point, Cass County, Missouri, for the new Eldorado.

The wagon was loaded, the cattle impatient to start. Mrs. Philly was seated in the wagon; George had also climbed in, while Phillip stood clinging to old Bose, for he was to go to California. As they lifted little May, the five-year-old pet of the household, into the wagon, she burst into a big boo hoo. "What's the matter, May?" "I want Jip to go." No words or promises could quiet the big sobs, while the tears ran down her sweet cheeks. At last it was decided that old Jip, the house cat, should go to California. He needed no calling, for he was already at May's feet No one dreamed that he was to play a prominent part in sustaining little May's life while on the long and tedious journey of two thousand miles, or that old Bose would almost give his life to defend the grave of little George Philly.

At St. Joseph they joined a large train, and on April 25 crossed the Missouri River, and, with thousands of other emigrants, took the Indian and buffalo trails leading to the west.

James Philly was a prominent tobacco grower, and, knowing well that the average tobacco chewer would rather go without his bread than his tobacco, he loaded a wagon with it, for which he paid twenty cents per pound, and long before he reached Fort Laramie, only five hundred miles from the Missouri River, he was selling it at one dollar per pound.

The Indians soon learned that Philly had

tobacco, and they became his best friends. They would do anything for tobacco or whisky. On several occasions the Indians surrounded the train, and, when Philly gave them a liberal supply of tobacco, they left.

On one occasion they left Philly's train, and, going direct to another one in plain view, they robbed and massacred the entire train. They looked upon Philly as a great brave, and one of the gods that had a great charm.

When the train reached Salt Lake City, Philly sold what tobacco he had left for five dollars per pound.

Before they reached the headwaters of the Humboldt, many cattle had died, and others were so poor and weak they gave out and were left by the roadside.

The train was reduced almost to starvation. Little May, the pet of the entire train, was nothing but skin and bones. She was so weak and frail she could not eat the coarse food.

One morning they found a rabbit at the door of the tent. They dressed and cooked it, and, oh, how May did relish that rabbit! How it came there none knew, but, strange to say, the next morning there was another rabbit at the tent door. For the next two weeks, while traveling down the Humboldt, almost every morning there was a rabbit at the tent door. All knew now that the faithful house cat, Jip,

had brought them there, for the willows along the river bank were full of them.

Although it has been fifty-two years since Jip brought the rabbits to the camp, none can make Phillip Philly believe but that Jip saved his sister May's life.

When they reached Ragtown on Carson River, a trader offered one hundred dollars for the cat, but, had he offered twice that, he could not have bought old Jip.

Twenty miles from Ragtown, little George Philly died, and was buried in a lonely grave beneath a large pine tree. There was no marble slab to mark the little pioneer's grave. Two large stakes were driven into the ground, and on the grave were piled immense rocks and stones. The child was wrapped in his blanket and laid in the little, narrow grave. The cold, hard clods were piled upon him, and so we left him sleeping alone in the wilderness. No sound to disturb the solitude save the soft cooing of the dove and the gentle sighing of the wind through the pines. Words can not describe the sorrow of that mother's aching heart as she stood beside the little, open grave that was to receive all that was mortal of little George Philly. The parting of that fond mother and her dead child was more than the frail body could stand. She sank to the ground, unable to walk. They carried her to the wagon. And when the last sad rite had

been performed by tender hands and loving hearts, with sorrow the train moved on. Next morning old Bose could not be found. They went back to the camp where little George had died, and found, near the grave, the faithful dog. During the night he had returned to the grave. The wolves had gathered in great numbers. Bose had tried to drive them away, and they had torn him almost to pieces; he was tenderly cared for, and was the first dog to arrive in California. He lived to be an old dog, and died at Dutch Flat, Placer County.

James Philly arrived in California, and, after many changes, he died in Santa Barbara. Mrs. Philly died in Santa Rosa, at the home of little May, while Phillip Philly, now an old man and full of rheumatics, travels from place to place in search of health.

THE DUEL.

If there is anything that tries a man's patience and brings out his combativeness more than any other one thing, it is a trip across the plains with an ox team, in company with fifty or a hundred men. If there is any inclination to shirk, or do any little, mean trick, or the slightest tendency to hoggishness, it will soon develop in him, hence so much discontent, wrangling, and quarreling in almost every train.

We had been traveling all day long over a

sandy plain. Not a sign of vegetation, except here and there a little stunted grass; not a weed, brush, or tree. No fuel, except the buffalo chips, and without kindling of some kind it was almost impossible to start a fire. Hence every man was on the lookout for kindling.

It was the rule for the team that led the train to-day to fall behind on the morrow. There were many advantages by being in the lead. Less dust and the choice of camping-ground. The men in the lead would pick up every stick of wood or kindling. As a rule, the fortunate ones divided with those less fortunate. But, unfortunately, there was a Shylock in almost every train.

John Gordon had been very successful on the day of which I write. At night he hid his kindling under the wagon, and during the night it was stolen.

Gordon accused Victor Dutrow, one of the men in the rear wagons, of taking it. Angry words ensued. Day after day the feud grew more bitter, many of their friends taking sides. It was soon evident there would be bloodshed over the affair.

Everything was said and done that could be to settle the affair peaceably, but to no avail. At last it was decided the men should settle it with firearms, and end the feud.

The preliminaries were arranged, and, just

as the sun was dipping his disk behind the western horizon, the men took their stand twenty-five yards apart, with their rifles in their hands. I shall never forget that scene. John Pennel gave the word, "One, two, three." Before the last word fell from his lips, Gordon, mad with rage and excited, took deadly aim at his antagonist and fired. Dutrow, cool and calm, fired his gun in the air.

It now dawned upon Gordon that the men had practiced a ruse on him; there was no ball in his gun. He walked up to Dutrow, gave him his hand, and they were warm friends from that day on, and there was no more Shylock in the train.

THE BUFFALO CHASE.

There are but few pioneers that crossed the plains in '49 and '50 who can not call to mind many wild and exciting encounters with the buffalo. It was not necessary to hunt for them, for every day hundreds could be seen, while it was a common occurrence for them to cross our path and come so near that they would make the cattle stampede. But to kill a buffalo with the average gun the emigrant had was not so easily done, for the animals were so large they appeared to be much nearer to the hunter than they really were. When they ran, they went about three times faster than the hunter thought they did, and were

getting away in double-quick time. It always took a good horse to bring the hunter up to them, and then they were the hardest animal to kill we found while crossing the plains. The chase of which I write I deem worthy of note, as it illustrates what fools men can make of themselves.

We were traveling up Platte River, some time in May. Not many buffalo had been killed by our train, and for days nothing had been talked of but one grand buffalo chase, in which we were to kill not less than a dozen buffaloes, and bring the meat to camp and jerk it at night. At last the plan was all arranged: twenty-four men, twelve on horseback and twelve on foot, were to join in the chase. They were to leave the camp one hour before the train left. They had gone about three miles when they saw a herd of buffalo quietly feeding, as they supposed, one mile away, while the truth is, they were more than three miles. Jerry Sullivan, who had been appointed to direct the chase, stationed the twelve men on foot (the writer being one of them) in a half circle, extending for a mile. Into this trap or ambush the horsemen were to drive the buffaloes, and we were to kill all we wanted, and at the same time were not to leave our post until told to do so by one of the horsemen. The writer and Victor Metcalf took their position in a low swale or ravine, and

here we watched and waited anxiously for the buffaloes to come.

It was noon; not a man or buffalo had we seen since taking our post. We were without food, and had but little water; in the distance we had seen the train pass out of sight. One o'clock, two o'clock came, and still no buffalo or men could we see. We had left our post and wandered over the low, rolling hills, taking, as we supposed, a cut-off to reach the emigrant trail. Our water had given out, and we were becoming weak for want of food. The sun had sunk to rest; it grew dark, and we came to a small brook lined with willows. It was now almost dark, when a large buffalo cow walked into plain view, not five rods away, and we fired, and she fell dead. Accidentally we had killed her; one of the balls had penetrated her head. We cut two large pieces of meat from the hind quarters, but could not make a fire for want of matches. When we had rested, we filled our canteen with water, taking a southwest course, as that was the direction in which we had last seen the train. Weary and faint we sat down to rest, but soon our hearts leaped for joy, for we heard a train that was traveling at night. How rested our weary limbs were! We fairly flew over the level plain, and soon hailed an ox team. They kindly took us in; but how we were surprised to learn that we were not

five miles from the camp where we left in the morning, while our train was not less than fifteen miles ahead. Next morning as the sun rose, we came up to our train. Already they had sent men with water and food for the lost hunters, for lost they were; not ten men had come to camp. All day long the train remained in camp, while not less than fifty men were in search of the missing hunters. It was not till late at night when the last man was brought to camp. Only three buffalo had been killed, and not fifty pounds of meat had been brought to the train. Thus ended my first and last buffalo chase.

AN INDIAN HUNT.

One of the most interesting scenes we witnessed while crossing the continent in 1850 was an Indian hunt. It was Sunday, July 26. We were camped on a beautiful stream near an Indian village of friendly Indians. There were more than one hundred wigwams. In the village were some trappers, who told us that the Indians were to have a hunt that day. Not a gun, bow, or arrow would they take, so this increased our curiosity to witness the sport. Early in the day at least two hundred Indians left the village for the hills two miles away, marching in Indian file, one directly behind the other, stepping in each other's tracks, so that it left but one man's footprint.

Not long after the hunters left, about seventy-five old squaws left the village and followed the hunters to a cluster of trees and underbrush. Here they secreted themselves; not a squaw could be seen. When the hunters entered the timber, they armed themselves with clubs about three feet long, and then separated, encircling hundreds of acres of land, full of wild animals,—bear, deer, panther, wolves, wildcats, raccoon, and rabbits. Ike and Sam Harris, Elias Barney, William Jones, and the writer had taken up their position on a high, rocky point that overlooked the hunting ground. The sun had risen high in the cloudless sky; we had become impatient waiting and watching for the sport to begin. Not an Indian could be seen, nor a sound could we hear; all was still as death. At last in the distance could be heard the wild and savage yells of the hunters. It was evident that they were driving the wild animals to the center of their ring. Louder and louder grew the yells; nearer and nearer they came, until the circle had grown so small that the hunters were two deep. The wild animals, frantic with fear, rushed from line to line, only to be driven back with clubs. Now and then a large deer could be seen, with head high in the air, making a dash for liberty. Then, as a wild and savage yell would arise, the line would part, and away the deer would go. Then the

line would close up and the yelling would be resumed. The climax was not reached until a huge brown bear, with mouth wide open, made a dash for the line. It was then the wild tumult reached its zenith. The yells of the excited mob made the very hills tremble. Again the line would part, and the bear was at liberty. At last the line closed in, and the cruel and brutal slaughter began, beating and clubbing everything to death inside of the ring. Many of the Indians were bespattered with blood, while the ground was strewn with dead and dying animals. At last all was quiet. The hunters threw down their clubs and took up the march, in single file, for the village. Then the old squaws came and packed each other with the game, like mules and horses, some of them carrying one hundred and fifty pounds. That night they held a war dance. Then came the feasting, when many of them ate so much they lay around on the ground like drunk men.

THE SNOW-STORM.

Who has not witnessed a snow-storm? But this one I deem worthy of recording, as the following incident actually occurred. It was the last day of April, 1850. We were traveling up Platte River. The sun had been hidden from view for two days; the air was raw and cold. The train had camped; the dark shades

of night drew on; all but the guards had retired, some in the tents and wagons, while many had spread their blankets in the open air. As the small hours of the night drew on, the thin, white flakes of snow began to fall, and, when the morning light fell upon the camp, it was wrapped in a white robe of snow three inches deep. Ox yokes, chains, and whips, pots and pans, beds and bedding were buried three inches deep.

The men began to shake the snow from their beds and put on their clothes. At this point the fun began. James Darling threw a handful of snow on William Boozers bare legs. This was the signal for a general free fight with the loose snow. Men were dragged from their beds, while the blankets and tents were torn from many others; not less than fifty men, barefooted and barelegged, with nothing but their shirts on, were all engaged in one free fight with the loose snow. Thick and fast the snow flew. Some of the boys were literally buried in it. Not less than a dozen men were throwing snow on Jake Doughman. He lost his temper, rushed to the wagon for his gun, and every man made for his tent; that ended the sport. Their feet and legs were as red as lobsters, while some of them were nearly frozen.

THE HERO OF 1850.

May 1.—It was a lovely morning. We were camped on Platte River, one mile from the hills. As usual, the cattle and horses were near the camp and were quietly resting, while all hands were at breakfast. John Samuels, of Arkansas, had saddled his little mustang horse, and had him in camp. We were all seated around on the ground eating, when, like a whirlwind, fifteen Indians on horseback came from the willows near by and ran off ten head of cattle. John Samuels grabbed a shotgun and a pair of old horse pistols, mounted his mustang, and pursued the fleeing Indians. As they reached the hills, he came up with them and cut loose with his shotgun, wounding two Indians. He then used his pistols. A real fight ensued, fourteen Indians against one white man; but Samuels stood his ground, while the arrows flew thick and fast. The Indians saw the other men coming, and fled, carrying the wounded with them. Samuels pulled six arrows from his horse and headed the cattle for the camp. It was found that three arrows had passed clear through his clothing.

John Samuels and his brother Nathan, who was also a member of our train, settled in Suisun Valley. Later John moved to San Francisco, and died there. A nephew is living

near Rag Canyon, Napa County. The famous mineral springs near Monticello bear our hero's name, and were named after the brothers.

THE DEAD DOG.

May 6.—One of the most unfortunate affairs that has happened during our long journey took place last night. Joe Batton was taking a dog to California. Batton had promised the captain to keep the dog tied, but became careless, and allowed it to run loose at times.

Last night the dog left the camp and went among the cattle. Jerry Gullion, taking it to be an Indian, shot and killed it. That frightened the cattle, and they stampeded; then the Old Harry was to pay. Not a wheel did the train move that day.

Batton tapped his keg of whisky, got drunk, and threatened to kill Gullion's cattle, and Gullion, too, if he did not pay one hundred dollars for the dog. Gullion refused. A trial was held, and Gullion was cleared of committing any crime, and exonerated as a brave man for shooting the dog. That so exasperated Batton that he left the train and joined another company.

Peace prevailed. Batton settled in Santa Rosa, where he lived for many years.

THE INHUMAN WRETCHES.

May 10.—To-day the writer and John Blaylock found a man dead by the roadside. Two stakes were driven into the ground, and over them was drawn a piece of wagon sheet, under which the man lay. From his appearance we judged he had not been dead long. By his side was a cup of water and a piece of hard bread. Near by lay a card, with the following on it: "Please give this man a cup of water and bread, if he needs it. He was not able to travel, and wanted to be left." The truth is, the inhuman wretches had left him there to perish, while they rushed madly on to the gold fields. In the dead man's pocket was a letter written at Charleston, Illinois, and addressed to William File, Council Bluffs.

May 12.—Our train is in a state of rebellion. Two men quarreled last night. John Pritchard stabbed William Smith with a dirk and killed him. Pritchard had a trial, and was acquitted. Every one is cross and ill-natured. The cattle are restless and will not feed. Two men are sick. Some want to travel with the men, die or not die. The whole train is on the war-path. Everything is wrong. The feed is poor. Wood is scarce. Wind is blowing a gale from the north, cold as a Christmas morning in Dakota.

Reader, did you ever eat a meal in an old

California corral, with the wind blowing thirty miles an hour, holding your hat on with one hand, trying to appease nature with the other, your bread and meat covered with dust and dirt, the gravel and sand flying so thick you could not see? If not, you know but little of the many trials the emigrants of '49-'50 had.

May 13.—We have had the most exciting time since we left the land of civilization.

The cattle scented a band of Indians to-day, became frightened, and stampeded. Almost every team left the beaten trail, and away they went at break-neck speed, over the plain, which was as level as a house floor, with here and there many deep gulches full of mud and water. It was almost impossible to stop them until they became exhausted or landed in a gulch, with the wagon piled on top of them. One wagon tongue was broken square off. It was repaired by taking a board from the false bottom in the wagon; after splitting this into narrow strips, the strips were nailed securely around the broken tongue, then they were tightly bound with a small rope.

This wagon with the broken tongue was brought to old Hangtown, and sold for seventy-five dollars. Many of the wagons were capsized and the bows smashed and broken. Pots, tin pans, and cups were scattered all over the plain.

May 14.—Sunday. Rained all the fore-

noon; in the afternoon all went fishing in the Platte River, one mile away. The river was full of catfish, and every man caught all he wanted. One man was left with each wagon as a guard.

We had not gotten five rods away when old Bob Gardener tapped the keg of old rye whisky we had brought for snake bite. (Every wagon had a keg of whisky for medicine and for snake bite.) In less than an hour Bob was drunk as a fool. He thought a few doughnuts would be nice for a change. When we returned, he was lying down. There were a sack of doughnuts, and twenty pounds of sugar wasted. We had doughnuts for a month. They got as dry as hardtack.

May 15.—Roy Burges, who has been sick for three weeks, died. His death cast a gloom over the entire train. He was only eighteen years old, and a great favorite with all in the train. He came from Knoxville, Tennessee. Before he died, he wrote a farewell letter to his mother, and addressed it to Mrs. William Burges, Knoxville, Tennessee. The letter was left in the care of the captain of the train, John D. Chambers. He carried it to Sacramento, and there mailed it. Chambers in after years settled in Pleasants Valley, and died there in 1870.

UP THE PLATTE.

May 16.—The sun rose from behind great, black clouds, which were rolling up like mountains. This is the land of thunder and lightning. No place on earth equals this for hail and rain, flashes of lightning, and peals of thunder that make the earth tremble.

For two days we have traveled through rain and hail, mud and water, sometimes knee deep. No dry wood to be had to get supper. The buffalo chips are wet, and will not burn. Nothing to eat but crackers and raw bacon.

The country is level, and as far as the eye can see the road is lined with emigrant wagons, covered with white muslin. On many of the wagons are mottoes, such as, "Off for California," "Pike County, Missouri," "Prairie Flower," "California or Bust." The majority of them came from Missouri, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Illinois, and there are but few trains of mules or horses. Eighty per cent of the wagons are hauled by the faithful ox, from two to four yoke to a wagon. The driver, with his long whip, walks by the side of his team from morning till night. At the word, the faithful leader will go through water and mud, or plunge into a rapid stream, or climb the steep and rocky mountainside. Thus the driver can take the ox team where the mule or horse would not go.

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UP THE PLATTE RIVER.

DOG TOWN.

One of the oddest little creatures we found in our journey of two thousand miles was the prairie dog, about as large as the poodle dog. As they sat up on their hind legs, all over the prairie, they resembled a miniature kangaroo. The dogs were so quick it took the best of marksmen to kill one fifty yards away. Many of the men were positive the dogs could dodge the bullets. They were very fat, and we tried to eat them, but could not get them down.

LOOP FORK OF THE PLATTE RIVER.

May 17.—The sun looked out from behind the mountains of great black clouds for a moment, and then sank back. It was a dark, gloomy day. The thunder roared, and vivid flashes of chain lightning ran along the ground. Still on and on we plodded, through water and mud, the rain pouring down in torrents, while every man was wet to the skin. This is the worst day's travel we have had since we left home.

When we arrived at Loop Fork, it was bank full. There was no ferry there, and some of the men went up the river eighty miles to find a crossing. There were over three hundred men anxious to find a crossing. The river was ten feet deep, about forty yards across, and very sluggish. For thirty-six hours we

cut and dragged willow brush to pile into the river. Fifty men swam the stream and piled brush in on the opposite shore, until the brush met. Then we swam our cattle across, while the men pulled the wagons over on the floating willow bridge. The last wagon had scarcely reached the bank when the water took the bridge away, and the next train must cross as best it can.

Loop Fork is the home of the buffalo. Not a tree to be seen. Thousands of buffalo were quietly grazing less than a mile away. For days the road was lined with buffalo heads and skulls bleaching in the sun. (On Loop Fork, in 1853, the writer's oldest child was born, who is now Mrs. M. E. Brown, of Acampo.)

May 20 was a perfect day. The sun shone bright and warm. We had camped for the night. The wagons, thirty-six in number, were drawn up in a circle, the cattle in the center for protection.

The evening was calm. Not a leaf stirred. All nature seemed to be in repose. The guards were at their posts.

The small hours of the night drew on, when peal after peal of thunder burst upon our ears. The heavens were aglow with the flashes of lightning. The rain and hail poured in torrents. The cattle swayed from side to side, bellowing and goring each other. All hands were called out on guard. With one wild and

mad rush, two hundred and fifty head of work oxen went crashing over the wagons, trampling one man, George Pike, to death, and wounding several others. Many of the cattle were not recovered.

After two days of delay, we were on our journey again, traveling through broad prairies and over rolling hills covered with waving grass, like fields of grain.

To our right and left were thousands of antelope. These were hard to kill, our company killing only six on the journey. Here and there could be seen a white wolf sneaking away from some vacated camp-ground with a piece of buffalo meat that had been left there.

May 21.—This morning we had an exciting time. Three buffalo ran into our camp. All hands rushed for their guns, but not until twenty balls had entered his hide did one of the buffalo come to the ground.

In twenty minutes his hide was off and his carcass in the wagons. At night we jerked the meat. This is done by driving four small forks of wood into the ground. A frame of sticks is then made. The meat is cut in thin strips, then dipped in hot brine and hung over the sticks. A small fire is made under the frame, and from the heat the meat is quickly dried. This is called jerked buffalo meat. On this the emigrants lived fine.

HOW JIM STOAKS KILLED HIS BUFFALO.

Every emigrant, before leaving for California in '49-'50, equipped himself with some kind of a gun, with which to protect himself from the Indians, as well as to shoot wild game.

Hence there were firearms of all descriptions,—double and single-barreled shotguns and smooth-bore and double-twisted rifles. The favorite gun was the old Kentucky rifle, with a barrel three feet long, that carried sixty balls to the pound.

Then there was the blunderbuss of the War of 1812. Jim Stoaks selected a blunderbuss. It was short, light, and handy. It was a dangerous looking gun. It looked as if it would kill everything it was pointed at. It was a smooth bore and carried a half-ounce ball.

Stoaks loaded it for Indians when we crossed the Missouri River. Days and weeks passed, and no Indians needed killing.

The most ferocious thing we saw on the plains, except a band of friendly Indians, was a herd of buffalo.

Jim became impatient to try his gun, and turned it loose on the buffalo. They were not one-fourth of a mile away. Jim got under the bank of a creek and crept up to within fifty yards of them. He took sight with both eyes

open, and, shaking like a trembling aspen leaf, he pulled the trigger.

It was a flint lock, and it missed fire. Jim picked the flint and took aim once more, expecting to blow a hole clear through that buffalo.

There was a roar, then a crash, and Jim landed in the bed of the creek, while the gun lay on the opposite bank. When the smoke cleared away, Jim looked for his buffalo, and was just in time to see the herd go over the hill a mile away. Not a hair on their hide had been hurt.

Should Jim Stoaks live to be as old as Methuselah, he will never forget the buffalo he did not kill.

A SABBATH ON THE PLAINS.

May 24.—Sunday. The sun shone warm and bright. The little birds chirped and sang their sweet songs. The gray and black squirrels jumped from bough to bough.

A clear mountain stream went rippling by. On this beautiful stream we had camped for the day. What a Sabbath in the midst of the wilderness! No ringing of the church bell, no prattling of the voices of happy children as they go to and from the Sabbath-school, but here we are, two hundred and fifty impatient and restless men. Some target shooting, others hunting, some washing, mending, and sew-

ing on buttons, others reading or playing cards (for sport), while a few of the old patriarchs were holding prayer-meeting.

All were happy and gay. Alas, what a change soon took place! The cholera appeared in the train, and almost every day we buried a man.

I shall never forget the scene and the experience of last night. Not a man closed his eyes in sleep. During the night Hi Dudly, Jake Snider, and Ben Ferguson died. The sick and dying are in every tent. No doctor to be had, and but little can be done. We had no cholera remedies except Ayers' Pain Killer, and that gave no relief. Many were sick only a few hours, and then died. No hope of relief until we reach the mountains, where we will have cool nights and pure, cold water.

The wagons are full of sick men. The train will scarcely stop long enough to bury the dead. The only thought is to reach the mountains and get away from the cholera.

To-day a man overtook us and begged the captain to stop the train and send men back to help bury some dead, but the majority of the men refused to do it, so the train rushed on, traveling all night.

May 26.—We buried six men in one grave. Nothing to mark their last resting-place but a pile of loose stones at the head and foot.

The emigrants on the south side of the

Platte River are crossing over at Ash Hollow. They, too, have the cholera. Every man is panic-stricken. Last night five wagons pulled off and left the train. The road is lined with emigrants night and day, striving to get in front. The death-rate is fearful. We find fresh-made graves at nearly every camping-place. Turn back you can't; go forward you must.

LOST IN THE SAND-HILLS.

It was a common occurrence for the emigrants to take their guns and look for a cut-off. By this they could save many miles of walking, for many emigrants walked nearly the entire distance from the Missouri River to California.

On June 4, Arthur Fisk and Silas Rhoads had taken a cut-off; they missed their bearings and were lost in the sand-hills. For two days and nights they wandered around in the hills, without food or water.

They killed a small buffalo calf and broiled the meat on the coals. When almost exhausted, they came out on the level plains. Their eyes were red and bloodshot, their tongues swollen and thick, and they could scarcely talk.

Faint and weary, Fisk sank to the ground and could go no farther. Rhoads left him and went in search of water. Near by he found a stagnant pool, and, filling his boot with

water, he carried it to Fisk, who soon revived and made an effort to walk.

Rhoads carried the guns and a piece of meat. They reached the pool of water, and in the distance saw an emigrant train that came within a mile or two of them, then turned to the right and left them. They filled their boots with water and started for the trail. Soon they saw another train pass by. They fired off their guns, but the emigrants, thinking they were Indians, paid no attention to them. Faint and weary, they made one more effort to reach the emigrant trail, but soon sank to the ground. The stagnant water had made them deathly sick.

Night set in. The air was cool, and with sage-brush they made a fire. Two of their company on horseback, who were looking for them, saw the fire and went to their relief. They were taken to the camp, and the next morning Fisk died. Rhoads was ill until we reached Salt Lake City, where he remained with the Mormons.

June 6.—We broke camp at daylight. The stock had no water or feed last night. At ten we camped on Squaw Creek. This is the ill-fated camp where James Crockett, of Arkansas, while en route for Oregon in 1847, shot and killed an inoffensive squaw. The Indians at once sent the squaws to the mountains, and in less than twenty-four hours the train was

surrounded by more than three hundred Indians, demanding the man who had killed the squaw. There were only fifty white men in the train, and they could go no farther.

After three days of parleying with the Indians, to save the entire train, Crockett was surrendered to them. With yells of triumph the savages dragged him from the camp. In plain view they danced and yelled with hellish glee, torturing their victim with all the means known to the savages of the forest. Then they skinned him alive, and, when the spirit had left the body, and they could inflict no more pain, they tied his remains to a wild Indian pony and turned it loose on the plains. Then the Indians let the train proceed unmolested.

ONLY ONE STORM.

June 10.—We camped fifty miles below Fort Laramie on the Platte. The day had been a perfect one. Hundreds of wagons were in sight. Thousands of men were camped within a few miles of us. Everything was calm and serene.

Horror! What is it that so suddenly causes man and beast to tremble? A long, ominous roll of thunder swept up out of the distance. It was evident a hurricane was approaching. The heavens had grown intensely dark. Great, black clouds, like mountains, rolled up in the

northwest. A faint, moaning wind stirred the tops of the trees. There was now and then a drop of rain. A cold, shivering chill pervaded the atmosphere. In fact, we all felt the air was withering cold. A brilliant glare of light burst suddenly upon us. The heavens seemed thrown open from end to end. A broad lake of quivering fire lay in the clouds, as dark as pitch. Only for a second, then on and on came the ever-increasing, rattling roar of thunder, that shook the very earth. The rain and hail poured in torrents. The tents were torn from their fastenings. The beds and clothing were buried in ice and hail six to seven inches deep.

The men sought shelter under the wagons, that were blown over like paper houses. The cattle and horses fled before the storm in wild confusion, and scattered for miles over the plains. Many of the cattle and horses were never found. In less than one hour the storm had passed. Ruin and destruction lay in its wake.

A SAD DAY.

June 15.—We camped on Platte River. The day was cold and gray, and a gloomy one for all of us. We found a man dead in the river, lodged against a drift. We dug a grave by the water's edge, and with long poles we rolled him in.

Two Indian arrows still remained in his body to show the cause of death. There was nothing to tell who he was except a small Testament in his pocket, in which was written, "Robert Vancleave, Bellefontaine, Iowa."

FAREWELL TO THE PLAINS.

June 19.—To-day we reached the base of the Rocky Mountains, and bade adieu to the land of thunder and lightning, hurricane and cyclone, desert and garden, river and plain.

What scenes we have witnessed! what suffering and hardships we have endured!

Land of the savage, through thy fields of waving grass, over thy hills of sand, across thy barren, sandy plains, through thy sage-brush thickets, we have dragged our weary bodies along. We have slept beside thy stagnant pools, fought thy bloodthirsty inhabitants, buried our companions in thy loose sand, food for the wolves. Land of sorrow, adieu.

FORT LARAMIE.

June 20.—Here we are, five hundred miles from the Missouri River. How every heart leaps with joy as we behold the fort, for it is the only house we have seen since we left the Missouri River. The fort is built of logs, and will garrison one hundred soldiers.

Fort Laramie is located on Laramie River, at the base of the Rocky Mountains, and at

the junction of the north fork of the Platte River.

Fifty soldiers were stationed here. They kept a ferry, and charged us twenty-five dollars to take a wagon across.

From here our route lay up the south side of the Platte sixty miles, where we crossed back over the Platte River. At this point the river is rough and rapid, and we found much difficulty in swimming our cattle across. Some of them we had to pull over with ropes. Some trappers and Indians had canoes here, five of which were lashed together, with poles across them. On this the wagons were taken across the river. The water was cold as ice, and ran very rapidly. One man was drowned here to-day,—Andrew Long, of Edyville, Iowa. Here we enter the mountains.

Our route lies up the north fork of the Platte River. To our left and in the distance rises the famous Black Mountain, in after years known as Pike's Peak.

What a wealth of gold and silver ore lay buried in the depths of these black hills!

We have now reached the mountains; the trail is very steep and rough. The emigrants find they have made a great mistake in overloading the teams. As a rule, the emigrants, when making up their outfits, had but little idea what they needed. Hence, everything

that a man's wife or a boy's mother could think of was piled in the wagons.

Sheet-iron stoves, feather beds, pillows, pillow-slips, blankets, quilts and comforters, pots and kettles, dishes, cups, saucers, knives, and forks. Many of these things about as much use to the emigrant as two tails to a dog.

Talk about clothing, some men had enough to last five years. The writer saw men with trunks full of white shirts and plug hats.

To cap the climax, one man was hauling a great walnut bedstead. He took it to Oregon. The wagons were full to the tops of the bows, and were twice as heavy as they should have been. Hence, every team was overloaded.

The cattle soon began to give out, and the emigrants began to throw away their baggage. Out went the cook stove, then the feather beds and pillows and pillow-slips, for they were as black as the ground. The road was lined with all kinds of baggage. This the Indians gathered up and carried off.

June 25.—This morning before sunup we broke camp and were ready for another day's hard work.

There was a slight drizzle of rain falling. Rain and sunshine were alike to us, and we pulled out of camp.

We are now climbing the Rocky Mountains. These are filled with deep, dark canyons, through which torrents of icy water go rush-

ing to the Atlantic, thousands of miles away in the east.

Here we find great forests where the brown and cinnamon bear, the panther, and thousands of other wild animals roam unmolested. Here is the home of the red men of the forest. Among them are some of the most savage and warlike tribes on the continent.

As we near the summit, the valleys grow narrower, until they form great canyons, that dip deeper and deeper, until they form an impenetrable barrier to our progress.

All day long we have followed the steep and rocky trail, cutting logs and rolling rocks out of the way, bridging canyons and gulches. Now up some long, narrow mountain slope, then down into some deep, dark canyon, then up out of the canyon the train must climb.

Our long train of ox teams, winding around the steep and rough mountainside like some great serpent, a man at every wheel, the driver urging the poor brutes toward the summit. The task was one that made the strongest heart grow sick. All day long we have been climbing over rocks and up the steep mountainsides. Logs and brush must be cut out of the way, and rocks rolled out of the trail.

Night has overtaken us, and no camping-ground has been found. The cattle are chained to the trees, with no water or food. Many of the men, weary with the toils of the

day, ate crackers and raw bacon, and were glad to get it.

When supper was over, we gathered around the bright camp-fire, smoked our pipes, and talked of the trials of the day.

I lay on my back, looking up at the bright stars in the deep blue of the cloudless sky, and listened in fulness of contented delight to the chat of my companions. I remember well how my heart beat with joy to know that we had at last reached the Rocky Mountains and the cholera had left us. I lay and listened, and the tales told that night by the men sitting around the camp-fire have never been erased from my memory.

The mountains are steep, rough, and rocky. Our train, consisting of forty-six wagons, two hundred and seventy-six oxen, and two hundred men, as it went rattling down the steep mountainside sounded like distant thunder, that could be heard for miles.

The wagons are yet overloaded, and many of the best cattle are lame. Their feet are bleeding, and they are giving out. On June 26 we shod our first ox. The ox is turned on his back and two pieces of thin iron nailed on each foot.

June 27.—We passed through Blue Canyon. Here the cliffs rise on either side of the trail, six to seven hundred feet high, assuming fantastic forms.

It was here we found the grandest and most enchanting scenery we had yet beheld. The towering cliffs, the wild blue water as it leaps from rock to rock, splashing and foaming in its mad rush to reach the waters below.

High up on the jagged cliff stands the mountain-sheep, gazing in wonder at the strange intruder.

As the noon-day sun penetrates this dark chasm, throwing a mellow light from cliff to cliff, all blends in one perfect hue of blue. The rocks, the cliffs, the trees and foliage, the men, the wagons and oxen, are all transformed into a perfect blue.

I shall never forget the scenes in this wild canyon.

As I stood beside great piles of bacon and flour, piled higher than my head, a notice on every pile, "This is clean; help yourself," little did I dream that, long before we reached the gold fields, many of us would be starving to death. Here in one pile was more than five tons of flour and bacon, left behind to lighten up the loads. This the Indians would not eat for fear of poison.

INDEPENDENCE ROCK.

No description can do adequate justice to the grandeur and majestic beauty of this rock. It was named by Colonel Freemont, who cel-

ebrated the Fourth of July here in 1842. He was then exploring the Rockies. Independence Rock was the landmark by which the trappers and the gold hunters steered their ox teams to the gold fields of California.

Independence Rock! There it stands like some great sentinel keeping guard over the sacred bones of departed Indian warriors. Could that old sentinel relate the scenes it has witnessed, the very blood would curdle in our veins.

The air never seemed so fresh and cool as it did in the shadow of this great sentinel. It is located on Sweet Water, and stands five hundred feet high. It is two hundred feet in diameter at its base. Thousands of names were carved on this rock by emigrants as they passed by. They had climbed as high as they could. The highest name of all was Cisro Dowd, of Ohio.

On this old sentinel I saw the names of William Palmer and Henry Seamon. This was the first trace I had seen of the company that left me sick at St. Joseph.

On July 10, 1850, James Tongue, of South Carolina, fell from the rock and was killed.

From here our route lay up Sweet Water, a beautiful stream of pure, cold water, that went dashing along over its rocky bottom.

The monotony of travel is broken by the

ever-changing scene. Every mile new scenery, grand and enchanting, bursts into view. The towering and rugged cliffs, the scraggy rocks, the graceful pine, the weeping hemlock, the leaping brook filled with speckled trout, all helped to whirl away the time.

To-day we passed a large Indian burying-ground, the first we have seen. To-night we camp near an Indian village of seventy-five wigwams. The old bucks were hale-looking men. All were armed with bows and arrows. A few had flintlock guns. I saw one who had an old seven-barreled pepper-box pistol. There were hundreds of papooses and dogs. Here we saw the first Indian dogs. They all look like prairie wolves. The squaws and children were much attached to them, and would not part with them at any price.

The only thing of interest was the accumulation of filth and dirt. Great piles of bones lay heaped up everywhere.

Next morning they gathered around the train in great numbers and demanded provisions. This the captain refused, but a liberal supply of tobacco was given to the chief. This satisfied them, and they gave us no more trouble. The train moved on.

Last night we camped near the summit. Here we breathe the pure mountain air, drink the ice-water as it trickles down from the

banks of snow. We sit around the bright camp-fire, talk of home and the scenes we have left behind. A new heaven seems to encircle us. New hope has risen in every heart. Behind us lie eight hundred miles of toil and hardship.

Wrapping our blankets around our weary bodies, we retire to rest, with the blue canopy of heaven for our tent. The bright stars smile upon us as we slumber. We all rejoice that the dreaded cholera has left the train.

SUMMIT OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

Come, dear reader, and stand with me, July 15, fifty-two years ago, on this great plateau eight hundred miles from the Missouri River, and nine thousand feet above the level of the sea, and I will show you one of the grandest scenes in the world.

When we look back toward the rising sun, eight hundred miles of uninhabited wilderness lies behind us. Here on the summit in this pass is one of the most wonderful springs of cold water in the world. It flows out into a great marsh grown up with willows and bulrushes. There are two outlets from the marsh or spring. One flows east, and finds it way into the Missouri River, thence into the Mississippi River, and thence into the Atlantic

Ocean at New Orleans, two thousand miles in the east.

The other outlet flows into the Lewis and Clark River, thence into the Columbia, and finds its way to the Pacific Ocean, fifteen hundred miles to the west.

July 10.—The night was clear and cool. Far overhead the stars sparkled like diamonds against the dark background of the sky, and looked down on the slumbering train, while the Indians crept upon the guards and drove off twenty head of cattle.

This was our first encounter with the Indians. Many of the men were asleep in the tents. In the midst of the hurricane of yells and screams, and the satanic clatter of horse and cattle hoofs, the men rushed from the tents with their guns. By this time the fight was over and the Indians had fled with the cattle. Fifteen men on horseback went in pursuit. Two Indians were killed. James McConnell was wounded with a poisoned arrow. He came from Marietta, Ohio.

But few can realize what it means to be wounded with the poisoned dart of an Indian arrow. Far from medical aid, no tender hands to bind up the painful wound. Then to be put in a wagon and hauled for days and weeks over a rough and rocky road.

It is impossible to describe a day's travel

over a rough and rocky road when referring to the journey across the plains with an ox team in '49.

July 11, 1850.—The morning star was shining brightly when the train broke camp. We entered a long, rocky canyon. For miles we climbed over rocks and boulders that seemed to deny our passage, then up over a dividing ridge, and down into a deep, dark canyon.

Twenty times we cross and recross the same stream, cutting brush, making road, filling in rocks, and building bridges.

To-day we saw where a train had tried to make its way along the mountainside. At last they could go no farther. They abandoned two of the wagons that were in the lead. The rest of the train they let down into the canyon by ropes.

Where our train left the canyon the mountain was so steep it required six to eight yoke of oxen to draw a wagon up over the precipice. At last we reached a small plateau and camped for dinner.

From here our route lay down a long, rough divide, but it ends. The train takes a dip down. Down we go. The bright stars were already dotting the blue canopy of heaven when we camped on a beautiful stream. It has been a long day, and we made slow progress. Every hour was full of wild experience.

ECHO CANYON.

Many of the men flung themselves down on the ground, and, without supper, were soon lost in sweet sleep.

ECHO CANYON.

It is impossible to convey by description or picture anything like a correct idea of the grandeur and beauty of this canyon. It is the home of the mountain-sheep. Here they live in great numbers. And yet it is almost impossible for the hunter to kill one. At the least sound they are off with the fleetness of the reindeer.

Echo Canyon is a deep mountain gorge, with red and gray mountain walls from one to two thousand feet high. For miles along this mighy chasm the stream rushes and leaps from rock to rock with fearful velocity. The rocks in many places along the canyon are worn into fantastic shapes, resembling ruined castles, with minarets and spires. From the cliffs and canyons the Indians swoop down on the careless and unsuspecting emigrants.

On July 25, 1852, a lonely train of three wagons camped in Echo Canyon. They had become careless, and no guards had been put out. In the stillness of the night, when all were wrapped in slumber, the Indians crept down to the train, and, with hellish yells and uplifted tomahawk, they rushed upon the sleep-

ing emigrants and massacred the entire train.

In 1853, when we passed this ill-fated camp, the wagons still remained there. The emigrants who had been massacred were all buried in six large graves.

There was one scene here in this grand canyon the writer will never forget. There on a beautiful knoll, overshadowed by a grove of graceful pines, was a lonely grave, protected by an immense pile of rocks.

On a small piece of board, which had been sawed from the wagon bed and nailed to a tree, was inscribed, "Hank Seamon, age 32; born in Malta, Morgan County, Ohio." I read it over and over, and I could hardly realize that I was standing by the grave of one with whom I had left my happy home. This was the second trace I had seen of the train since they crossed the Missouri River and left me sick at St. Joseph.

THE MAN THAT SOLD HIS WIFE.

As early as 1853 many women and children crossed the plains. Jake Fouts and his young wife joined our train at Council Bluffs on the Missouri River. They came from Bellefontaine, Iowa. Long before we reached the gold fields (as the sequel of this story proves), every man and woman regretted the day they joined the train.

We had scarcely gotten started when Mrs. Fouts raised a row with one of the ladies, then with some man. She was constantly quarreling with some one, and when not successful in finding a victim to quarrel with, she always had her husband to fall back on, and she did, and then she would make it lively for him.

When we reached the Indian territory, and she saw the first Indians, she became hysterical. At first we all thought the woman was dying (and some wished she had died).

About twice a week she had one of these hysterical fits. Sometimes while walking along the road she would throw up her arms and scream, then down in the road she would go; three or four men would pick her up and dump her into the wagon, where she would lay for two or three hours. After she recovered, she was ready for a fight with the first one who would quarrel with her.

During the trip she tried several times to shoot her father-in-law, who was with them. Thus she kept things lively.

Her husband tried to give her away, but no, siree, we all knew her too well.

On Carson River we met some traders. She took a fancy to one of them. Fouts saw his opportunity, and sold her to him for three hundred dollars. It was a day of rejoicing when we saw her leave the train.

The trader took her to Hangtown and gave her to a gambler, and that was the last we heard of her.

BROWN AND THE BUFFALO.

One of the most amusing scenes we witnessed while crossing the plain in 1850 was near Ash Hollow, on Platte River. The great luminary of the day had run its course and was sinking to rest behind the snow-capped mountains in the distance, when the train drove into camp. Near by were a large buffalo bull, two cows, and a calf. James Brown, Walter Woods, and Jerome Swim, who were carrying their guns, rushed up to them and fired; the calf fell wounded, and then commenced to bawl. The cows made for the hills, while the bull, with head down, came bellowing, rushing for the nearest man,—James Brown. His gun was a muzzle-loader, and he had no time to load, and so he made for a large rock near by, but soon discovered that he could not get upon it. He then began to run around the rock, and the bull pursued him; but in making the short circles around the rock Brown was the faster, and instead of the bull catching him, he held his own. It was a chase for life or death. Around and around the rock they went. Brown had dropped his gun, and was running for dear life. Fortunately

John A. De Villiss

Woods and Swim came to his relief, and shot the bull, and so ended the chase. It was a long time before Brown heard the last of his buffalo bull.

THE MAMMOTH TRAIN.

April 13, 1865, before the door of a neat cottage in Canton, on the Mississippi River, in Louis County, Missouri, stood an emigrant wagon and four restless, impatient horses.

In the wagon was the young bride of four months who had resolved to accompany her husband, John A. Devilbiss, to the land of gold to seek a home.

The handshaking, "God be with you," and they were off for the Pacific Coast. They soon joined other emigrants and formed a small train.

They crossed the Missouri River at Platts mouth, and took the old emigrant trail leading up the Platte River. The Indians were hostile. Not a day passed but scores of savages could be seen on the war-path, heinously painted, armed with rifles, bows and arrows.

The emigrants now organized a large train for mutual protection. Several small trains were joined together and formed a mammoth train of one hundred and twenty-eight wagons, three hundred mules and horses, one hundred and seventy-four head of oxen and milk cows, making a total of five hundred and twelve head

of stock. There were three hundred and eighty-four men, women, and children.

Doctor Fronda was elected captain, and the train was known as the "Fronda Train." Every man was well armed, and the train moved along with the order of an army.

Days and weeks came and passed, and nothing worthy of note transpired.

From May 10 they were beset with difficulties. On the 20th a sad accident occurred. Mr. and Mrs. Snider, while riding in the wagon, were accidently shot. A gun that was hanging on the bows of the wagon was discharged by the jolting of the wagon. The ball passed through Snider's body and wounded Mrs. Snider in the chest. Dr. Fronda extracted the ball, and after ten days' delay the train moved on.

Snider arrived in California, and settled in Mendocino County, where he still lives. Mrs. Snider died in 1891.

On June 15 another sad accident occurred. There was a family of mutes in the train by the name of Walls, three men and one woman. The train had camped. During the day many Indians had been seen lurking in the willows. A man by the name of Watts saw one of the mutes approaching the train. It was dark, and, supposing him to be an Indian, Watts shot, killing him instantly. This almost caused

a rebellion in the train. To pacify the mutes, Watts was disarmed of all his firearms.

June 18 had been a lovely day. Not a cloud in the sky. Not an Indian or buffalo had been seen. The train had camped on Platte River. The night was calm and sultry. The train was wrapped in slumber. The small hours of the night drew on. The horses and cattle were quietly resting near camp, guarded by thirty-five men on horseback. Without a moment's warning they sprang to their feet; the mules were braying, the cattle bellowing, lowing, and goring each other. With one wild and mad rush, five hundred head of horses and oxen went tearing through the guards. By some unknown means the red devils had stampeded the entire train. The clatter of the horses' hoofs, the bellowing and lowing of the cattle, made a roaring like distant thunder. The sleeping men sprang from their beds with rifles in hand, and surrounded the train, to protect the women and children, while Mr. Devilbiss and the rest of the guard followed the frightened stock. At break of day, when they had them checked, they were thirty miles from camp.

The redskins saw the emigrants were in such numbers and on their guard, and did not dare to attack the train, so failed to get any plunder.

June 20 the train reached the sand-hills. Not a tree or shrub could be seen. Not a stick of wood could be found. Sand, sand everywhere, and cooking must be done. But the women and children proved themselves equal to the occasion. It was amusing to see them, old and young, gathering buffalo chips for fuel. As none but the driest ones would burn, and as it required at least a bushel of chips to cook a meal, it was no easy task. Some of the chips looked as though they might be fifty years old. They were white as cotton and as light as feathers, and burned like charcoal.

July 2 was a sad day. One of the Walls' little boys died, making the second death in the family since they left the Missouri River.

July the 4th was not only a day of patriotic rejoicing, but a day long to be remembered by every one in the train, from the fact that there were two births, and they were both girls. After a few days' delay, the train moved on. In less than a week there was another birth, and the train must camp.

After many delays and six months of long and weary travel, they arrived at Carson City on September 16, where Mr. Devilbiss remained for four years, and then moved to Yolo County and settled near the spot on which Winters now stands. In 1889 Mr. Devilbiss built the Winters Hotel, a fine brick building,

at a cost of $31,000. Mr. Devilbiss is still the popular proprietor, and is known far and near as a kind and hospitable landlord.

A SUPPER ON THE PLAINS.

There are but few pioneers of '49-'50 who can not call to mind the difficulties they experienced in preparing a supper on the plains after a long, hard day's travel.

Though the menu was very plain, it was sometimes difficult to prepare. As a rule, it consisted of hot bread, fried bacon, coffee or tea, with sugar.

Should I live to be as old as Methuselah, I shall never forget the fifteenth of May, 1850. All day long we had been traveling through a cold, drizzling rain. Many of the men had walked all day through the mud and water, and were wet to the skin.

The train had not stopped for dinner, but we ate a lunch as we walked along. It was almost dark when the train drove into camp. Many of the men were out of humor and ill-natured. Some were cursing the captain for traveling in the rain, while others were cursing the storm. A few were in high spirits and took everything in good humor.

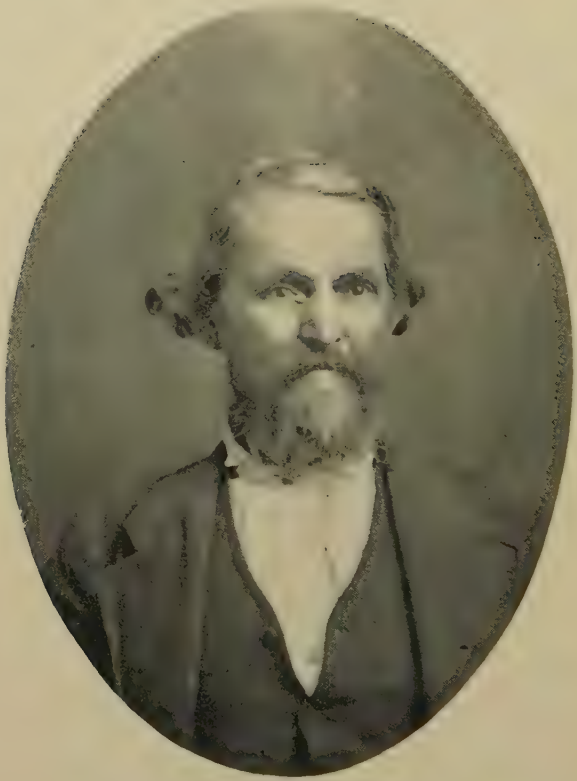
To add to the unpleasantness of the situation, there was no feed for the cattle near the camp, and they must be taken a mile or two

to the hills and guarded overnight. The men took a lunch and left without supper.

It was now raining hard, with a cold southwest wind blowing at the rate of thirty miles per hour. We struck our tents and kindled our fires. There was not a stick of dry wood to be had. Bob Smith had found an ox yoke during the day, and put it in the wagon. It was dry and hard. This was divided around the camp for kindling, and made many a coffee-pot boil.

If bread was to be made, a large tin pan was used as a kneading-trough. A liberal quantity of saleratus and warm water were stirred together; the requisite amount of flour and salt were added, and the dough well kneaded. The dough was then flattened out until about one inch thick, then it was placed in an old-fashioned skillet or Dutch oven with an iron lid. It was then set on the coals, and a small fire was built on the lid, and by the time the meat was fried and the coffee made, the bread would be done. Sometimes the top and bottom would be burned as black as a coal, while the center was still raw.

On the occasion of which I am telling you, supper was progressing nicely, when the coffee pot upset and put out the fire. Just then old Bob Smith, who was getting supper, exploded. I shall not attempt to describe the scene or



Capt. S. N. Harriman

repeat the language that followed. At last supper was ready. Each man took a tin cup of hot coffee, a slice of bacon, and a chunk of hot bread, as yellow as saffron, and thanked his lucky stars that kind Providence had once more smiled upon him. Then the pots and dishes were stowed away, and we wrapped ourselves in our blankets and were soon lost in refreshing sleep, dreaming of home and the gold fields in California.

GREEN RIVER.

July 18.—Arrived at Green River. This is one of the most dangerous streams we have crossed. The water is icy cold and very rapid. There was no ferry. Some trappers—white men, about half wild, with Indian squaws for wives—had some canoes, for the use of which we gave them an ox that was lame. In swimming the cattle across, Joe Butler, of Iowa, took the cramps, and was drowned. His body was carried down the stream, and was not recovered. This was in 1850.

THE ROBBERS.

Few, if any, of those who crossed the plains in '49 had a narrower escape from death than Captain S. N. Harriman, of Howard County, Missouri.

In 1861 Mr. Harriman organized a large

train, consisting of thirty-six wagons, sixty-four men, forty women, and ten children.

They also had twenty-five saddle horses, ten milk cows, and three dogs. Mr. Harriman was elected captain of the train.

On May 3 he left St. Joseph for the gold fields in California. From the day the train left the Missouri River they were beset with troubles and trials, sickness and death, then rebellion, robbery, and starvation.

They had reached Sweet Water, when James Gibson rebelled and refused to stand guard. After some parleying, the captain gave him just ten minutes to get his gun and go on guard, or he would hang him to the nearest tree. Gibson wilted, and walked sulkily to his post.

On another occasion the dogs frightened the cattle, causing them to run away and smash up several wagons, wounding a boy. The captain then had the dogs killed. This caused more trouble in the train.

Through trials and difficulties they reached Raft River, and camped for the night. Everything was quiet. The most of the women had retired, when the train was surrounded by a band of robbers, who demanded the surrender of the entire train, or they would kill every man, woman, and child. After a deliberate consultation, they surrendered the train to the

robbers, and walked out into the dark, and took the trail for California on foot, the men carrying the small children. They were allowed to take their blankets and what provisions they could carry.

How fared it with them after the robbers drove them out on the desert?

August 2, about one hundred men, women, and children began their long and perilous journey of eight hundred miles.

What words can portray the emotions of the mother's heart as she walked out of the tent with her loved ones into the dark, possibly to perish with starvation.

Oh, how long and weary the days were to the hungry children as they trudged along with their little packs!

Through the kindness of Captain Harriman we had access to his diary.

August 1.—The robbers took the train a little after dark. Hitched up the cattle and drove off with the wagons.

August 2.—They make their first day's journey on foot. Men, women, and children packed like animals. Boys and girls not over eight years old, each with a few pounds of provisions on their backs.

A picture no artist can draw. The scene is beyond comparison. The day was cool, and they made a good day's journey. They camped

on Spring Run, where the water was good and wood was plentiful.

August 3.—Not a cloud in the horizon. Hot and sultry. They camped near the river in the willows. The mosquitoes nearly ate the children up.

August 4.—Women and children discouraged. Had but little rest last night.

August 5.—Left camp at daylight. It is so hot the children can not travel in the heat of the day.

August 6.—The road has left the river and leads through the sage-brush hills.

August 7.—Still in the sage-brush. The sand is loose and soft. The children can scarcely walk in it.

August 8.—The heat has increased, but the road has led back to the river, and they find shelter in the willows from the terrible heat.

August 9.—Yesterday the water we found was warm and full of alkali. The roads were the worst they had since the robbers took the train.

August 10.—Grandpa Kelsey is sick, and they have to camp. Poor old man, he has given out. Isaac Gill and Ben Foote carried his pack all day.

August 11.—Camped on Salt Creek. George Devill killed a deer, and they jerked the meat and distributed it around the camp.

August 12.—They travel down Humboldt and camp on Snake Creek. Harvey Kincade and Nathan Kelsey, while on guard, killed six snakes.

August 13.—Neal Hughes and John Smith took a cut-off. It turned out to be a "cut-on," as they did not arrive in camp till late in the night. They were almost famished for water.

August 14.—Camped on Humboldt. Some of the men fished all night, and caught many small, flat fish. In Ohio we call them shiners.

August 15.—Have been on half rations ever since the robbers took the train, though the children under eight years old have all they want to eat.

August 16.—Day by day they drag their weary limbs along. Many of the women are almost barefoot. Some of them have their feet tied up with rags, and can be traced by the blood on the sand.

August 17.—James McDonnel is sick, and they have to camp. Drank alkali water, and came near dying.

August 18.—Many of the men and women went fishing, and caught great quantities of small, bony fish, but have no lard to fry them in. They roast them in the coals or ashes, or boil them.

August 19.—All are able to travel. An amusing incident took place to-day. Isaac

Johnson gave out and refused to go any farther. Grandpa Kelsey offered to carry him and his pack. This so irritated Johnson that he picked up his pack and led the company the rest of the day.

August 20.—T. B. Cropper and J. B. Warder, while on guard last night, killed a large deer. The meat was jerked and all had a share.

August 21.—This has been the hottest day we have experienced, and we are still one hundred and fifty miles from the Humboldt meadows.

August 22.—The road is hard and level, and the women and children walk with wonderful courage.

August 23.—John Lamb and Richard Reede came near being drowned while seining with a brush seine.

August 24.—Have not seen a white man since the robbers took the train.

August 25.—Grandpa and Grandma Kelsey, though eighty years old, led the company nearly all day. Criss Leonard and W. H. Harriman carried their packs for them.

August 26.—Cool and nice. Road good. Walked nearly all day.

August 27.—Some of the women and children are lagging far behind. Only traveled a few miles to-day. Mrs. Reede and Mrs.

Harriman are not well, and they camp. Perfect harmony has prevailed ever since the robbers took the train.

August 28.—Reached the Humboldt meadows. All are happy and in good spirits.

August 29.—Not a cloud to be seen. The sun is beaming down on the little band of heroic emigrants that are battling for their lives.

The night they crossed the forty-mile desert, Mr. Harriman's daughter gave out and sank down on the sand. No words could prevail on her to move. At last her father told her that they must leave her to die, or the whole company would perish when the sun rose. With an heroic effort, and the aid of the men, she rose to her feet and made her way to Ragtown.

It was just one month to a day from the time the robbers took the train until the day they reached Ragtown, where they received relief.

On September 28 Captain Harriman arrived in Yolo County, with just twenty-five cents in his pocket. He now resides in Winters, at the ripe old age of eighty-seven years. He is well known and beloved as Father Harriman.

A FIGHT WITH THE INDIANS.

One can not scan these pages without realizing at a glance that every pioneer who

crossed the plains in an early day bore his full share of hardships, difficulties, and dangers in order to reach the gold fields. Though all along the route the land teemed with game, and the waters were full of fish, yet many sickened and died, while others perished for want of food and water.

Many men and women were robbed and massacred by the Indians and the children carried off into the wilderness.

As late as 1861 it was no light undertaking to cross the plains with an ox team. While some trains passed through the Indian territory unmolested, others were beset with dangers and difficulties from the day they crossed the Missouri River.

The writer is indebted to Mr. Pratt for the following narrative:—

In 1861, E. D. Pratt, in company with Captain Woodman, left Waincenter, Dupage County, Illinois, for the new Eldorado. At Omaha they joined a large train of seventy-six wagons, three hundred head of oxen, thirty head of milk cows, and twenty head of saddle horses.

In this train there were three hundred and four men, women, and children. They had scarcely started on their long and tedious journey when the captain and many of the men

were wrangling over the management of the train.

To add to their already numerous trials, the Indians were hostile and on the war-path. Days and weeks of intense anxiety and excitement passed.

They had reached the Black Hills, six hundred miles from the Missouri River, and were camped on a beautiful mountain stream. The bank was lined with willows. The water was pure and cold. Wood was to be had in abundance, and the mountainside was covered with waving grass, dotted with flowers of a thousand hues, which filled the air with sweet fragrance. It was an ideal camp-ground.

A long, hot, sultry day in June was drawing to a close. The skies grew dark, the atmosphere thick and heavy. All felt the oppression. It had grown intensely dark. A strange and ominous quiet rested on the camp. A death-like stillness pervaded, such as ofttimes precedes some calamity.

To add to the already extreme solitude, a great hoot-owl set up his "to-hoot, to-hoot," then another and another, until the mountains seemed filled with hoot-owls.

It was evident the Indians were preparing to attack the train. The emigrants were not long left in doubt, for like a mighty tornado a band of Indians on horseback rushed upon

the guards. With hellish yells and savage triumph they stampeded the cattle and fled to the mountains.

In the fight they killed Silas Grant. When they carried him to camp, thirteen arrows still remained in his body. His brother William, who had been sick many weeks, saw him. The shock was so great that he died before morning.

Mr. Pratt, who was on guard and in the hottest of the fight, with twenty other men on horseback, followed the fleeing Indians for many miles, and recovered all the cattle but six.

The next day the two brothers were wrapped in their blankets and were buried in one grave. Strange to say, no one else was wounded, although several arrows passed through their clothing.

After six long months of toil and hardship, they arrived at Sacramento.

Mr. Pratt, now at a ripe old age, has a pleasant and happy home near Winters.

RATTLESNAKE CANYON.

July 17.—Passed through Rattlesnake Canyon. The scenery down this canyon, once beheld, can never be forgotten. Narrow and rocky, with high cliffs on each side. Not a drop of water to be had in the canyon. Under nearly every rock and in every hole was a snake. Not only rattlesnakes, but snakes of

every description, including great buffalo snakes five to six feet long.

No wonder the emigrants with every wagon hauled a keg of old rye whisky for snake bite. And, strange to say, not an emigrant was bitten by a snake from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Nevertheless, every drop of snake-bite remedy was gone long before we reached the gold fields in California.

To-day we reached the headwaters of White Rock Canyon. From here we make a rapid descent into the Great Salt Lake Valley. In after years the rock was quarried from this canyon for the building of the Mormon temple.

July 18.—Long before the great luminary of the day lit up the mountain peaks, we broke camp. Every heart beat with joy, for we were only twenty-five miles from Salt Lake City. Down this canyon was the roughest road we had found.

As two great trains went thundering down over the rocks, they could be heard five miles away.

We struck the valley eighteen miles below the city. What a contrast between the wild and rugged mountains we had been traveling through and this beautiful valley, spread out before us and stretching off to the west for fifteen miles to the lake shore, fertile and rich, with thousands of acres of golden grain, and

here and there an occasional field of waving corn!

Here I saw the sharpest razor-back and longest-nosed hogs in the world. They were wild hogs they had found in the mountains. One old sow with eleven pigs looked as if she could chase a grub worm into his hole and root it out of its nest. When fat, some of them would weigh six to eight hundred pounds.

We also saw ducks, geese, and turkeys. They were the only ones we saw from the Missouri River to the Pacific Coast.

THE STOLEN BOY.

This little book contains no sadder story than the one told to the writer by William Phillips, the uncle of the stolen boy, Jackson Reynolds, the hero of this story. William Reynolds, wife, and boy, four years old, left Paduca, New York, going to Lee County, Iowa, by stage. Here they bought an outfit, which consisted of one wagon and three yoke of cattle. April 3, 1852, they left Keokuk, bound for California, the land of gold, sunshine, and flowers. At Bellefontaine they joined the Runyon train, from Wisconsin. From here they made their way to Council Bluffs, on the Missouri River, then the starting-point for overland emigrants to the Pacific Coast. May 6 they crossed the

Missouri River, and took the trail up the south side of Platte River, and everything went lovely until they reached the sand-hills three hundred miles from the Missouri River. Here they found feed and water scarce, and the cattle, already poor and weak, began to give out. The train, which consisted of seventy-five wagons, two hundred and fifty men, women, and children, four hundred and twenty head of oxen and milk cows, soon began to separate, that the cattle might get more feed. William Reynolds, wife, and one child; Charles Bradley, wife, and three children; Cyrus Moore and wife; also seven other men and five wagons, pulled off and left the large train. When near Fort Laramie, the Indians stole five head of cattle, shot and wounded one horse so he had to be killed. From this day on their troubles and trials began. When they reached Independence Rock, on Sweet Water River, the Indians stampeded the cattle and succeeded in driving off three head. This so reduced the number of cattle that they were compelled to leave one wagon. July 15, while camped on the summit of the Rocky Mountains, Mrs. Bradley died with mountain fever. She had been sick three weeks in the wagon. Her death threw a sad gloom over the little band of pioneers. Without coffin or box, they buried her beneath a

scraggy pine on a high point that overlooked the barren, sandy plains they had just crossed. With three motherless children and sorrowing hearts they left the sad and lonely campground. Little did they dream what was still in store for that brave little band of pioneers. Clothing and provisions had been thrown away to lighten the load, their cattle reduced to two yoke to each wagon. The road was rough and rocky; the mountains were steep and rough, and they were compelled to leave another wagon behind. At Green River they took the road that led by Fort Hall. Provisions were almost gone, and but little money left, so they sold one wagon for thirty dollars and twenty-five pounds of jerked deer meat. Their road now led through the barren, sandy hills, covered with sage-brush and greasewood, with but little feed and water. When they reached the Humboldt River, they found the Indians hostile, and they joined another small train. They now felt secure, and neglected to keep out a guard over the cattle.

August 3 was a day never to be forgotten by that little band of pioneers. They had camped in the bend of the river; feed was good; the cattle were quietly grazing in the twilight, when, like a tornado, a band of Indians, mounted on ponies, rushed from the willows and stampeded the cattle, and fled for

the hills two miles away. The men pursued the fleeing Indians, and got most of the cattle. 'Mid the savage yells and wild confusion that followed, two Indians rushed into camp, slew Mrs. Moore, and, catching up little Jackson Reynolds, they fled to the willows near by, and disappeared in the darkness. No pen can describe the heart-rending screams of that fond mother as they rang out on the still night air, "Oh, my child, my child!" As the savages fled, the cries of the poor boy grew fainter and fainter, until they were lost in the distance and could be heard no more. For more than three weeks they remained in camp, searching up and down the river for the stolen boy, but no trace of him could be found. At last, with sorrowing hearts, they left the ill-fated camp-ground. After six months' toil and hardships, sickness and death, they arrived at Weaverville.

Weeks, months, and years rolled by, and no tidings of the stolen boy came. When the sorrowing hearts could bear the suspense no longer, the fond father resolved to make one more effort to find their boy. Three times did William Reynolds visit the Humboldt River to wander through the mountains and to visit many tribes of Indians, journeying down through Colorado, and coming out at Los Angeles, weary and tired, having lost all hope

of finding his lost boy. With an aching heart he turned his steps towards his sad home. When near the Tehachapi Mountains, he camped for the night, and, as the dark shades of night drew on, a pack train came up and camped,—two Mexicans and a sunburnt youth, dressed in buckskin. The mustang horses were unloaded, hobbled, and turned out to feed. Sitting around the dying embers, they smoked their pipes and cigarettes, but the young man, weary with the day's toil, soon fell into a sound sleep, while the Mexicans listened to the strange story William Reynolds told them of his stolen boy. Then, in broken English, they told him how, in years gone by, some Mexican miners in Mexico had rescued a boy from a band of roving Indians. With eagerness the father caught every word as it fell from the Mexican's lips. Then, in hurried accents, he asked his name. The Mexicans could give none, but pointed to the young man, now sound asleep. The father could no longer suppress his emotions; he sprang to his feet, and before the Mexicans could realize what was taking place, the father had aroused the weather-beaten, sunburnt youth, and in hurried and excited tones he begged him to tell him his name. What words can describe the joy of that father, when he told him his name was Reynolds. Little by little did he tell the

strange story, how in his youth he had been stolen by the Indians; how they had wandered up and down the vast wilderness, inhabited only by savages of the forest. Long did the fond parent fold his long-lost son to his throbbing heart, while the two poor Mexicans were overjoyed to know they were the means of uniting father and son. Long before the sun had lit up the snow-capped peaks of the Sierra Mountains, father and son were hastening to that little log cabin on the bank of Weaver Creek.

Let us draw the curtain and shut out the careless eye from that joyful meeting of mother and son. After so long a separation, William Phillips, now old and feeble, lives with his nephew, Jackson Reynolds, in Amador County, California.

SALT LAKE CITY.

July 20.—The morning dawned bright and beautiful. The sun looked out from his cloudless throne in the heavens, and kissed the lake and mountain peaks as sweetly as though the Mormons were a Christian people.

The first glimpse of the city made every heart leap with joy, for we were approaching life and civilization.

What emigrant, after so long a journey, would miss the opportunity of a bath in the beautiful lake? A few moments, and all the

men were floating around on the lake like so many corks. The density of the water is so great a man can not sink. Horses and cattle can not swim in it; they simply turn over on their sides and flounder in the water.

In July, 1847, Brigham Young located the city and made it the rendezvous of the Mormons.

It is a model city. The streets are one hundred and fifty feet wide, bordered on either side with long rows of shade trees. Streams of pure mountain water were conducted in ditches along both sides of all the streets.

Salt Lake City is nestled in the Great Basin between the Rocky and the Sierra Nevada Mountains. What a strange religion, or fanaticism, has led this people to seek this wild and secluded spot, surrounded by savages and wild beasts!

The fields were full of wild flowers. A beautiful stream of cold water flowed through every field. The geese, pigs, and children swarmed in great numbers, for in every house there were two to three women. Here we saw the only chickens in our journey of two thousand miles.

When we entered the city fifty-two years ago, there were but few places of note, except the Tabernacle. It resembled a large kettle turned bottom upwards. Near by was Brig-

ham's residence, known as the Beehive. Here lived his twenty-five wives and one hundred concubines. Some of these were old, while others were very young. As for beauty, they compared with the rest of his flock. Many of them were foreigners. Now and then there were lively times at the Beehive. Over one hundred children called him papa.

While in the city, I had the pleasure of an introduction to Brigham Young. A man of medium height, thick set, short neck. His face was full and round. He wore a dark suit of homespun goods. He was a man of fine appearance, and in the prime of life. Every word that fell from his lips was law and gospel to his followers. He ruled with an iron hand, and there was perfect law and order in his domain.

Our stay in the city was a pleasant and delightful one, and, had it not been for the gold fields in California, many young men would have remained there.

It was our good fortune to spend a Sabbath with these deluded people. The sun rose bright and warm. All nature seemed to smile. The waving grain, the rich fields of corn, the graceful shade trees along the streets, lent their charms to the day of rest.

All labor was suspended. The men, women, and children put on their best to attend preach-

ing in the Tabernacle, conducted by Brigham Young.

The road was lined with wagons. I shall never forget that Sabbath. In every wagon (they had no carts or carriages) were one man, two to five women, and children by the dozen.

At an early hour the Tabernacle was filled to overflowing.

It is a country where the sunlit hills and rich valleys reflect themselves in the lives of these sober, industrious people. For there is no place in the world where the contrast is so vividly portrayed between civilization and the savages of the forest.

Salt Lake Valley is one of the garden spots of the earth. All kinds of produce were cheap. The Mormons did not care for our money, as pumpkins were a legal tender. Spices of all kinds were high. Cinnamon, cloves, ginger, nutmeg and allspice, sugar, tea, coffee, and rice were five dollars per pound, while we could buy a fresh-made cheese as large as a small wash-tub for one dollar. Butter ten cents per pound. And we could get a cart-load of eggs for a pound of tea.

As a class, the Mormons were sober, clean, and industrious, also ignorant and happy. They had no communication with the outside world. They knew but little about the dis-

covery of gold in California, and nothing about the roads.

From Salt Lake City two roads led to the gold fields. One trail went south of the lake, crossed the River Jordan, and over the Humboldt Mountains. This trail was called "Humboldt Cut-off." Many men and cattle perished on this route in 1850 for the want of water.

The river Jordan is the outlet to Salt Lake. It drains the valley and finds its way into the Colorado Desert.

We found Salt Lake Valley a great oasis in the heart of the wilderness, surrounded on the east, north, and west by wild, rough, and rugged mountains.

After eight days' feasting, recreation, and rest, we bade adieu to these kind and hospitable people and took the trail that led to the north of the lake. This trail also led to Oregon by the way of Fort Hall. We crossed Webber Creek and Bear River. About half way between Webber Creek and Bear River we passed a boiling sulphur spring. The Indians and Mormons used this water as a panacea for all kinds of disease. There is also another spring near by that is icy cold.

ROBBERS GLEN.

July 30.—We passed through Robbers Glen, one of the wildest and most desolate glens on the route.

Occasionally the old Fremont trail could be seen. The scenery was constantly changing. Sometimes we were climbing along the steep hillside among the boulders and sharp, jagged rocks; again we would plunge into the bottom of some deep canyon, making our way along the rocky bed.

Just at dusk we camped in this wild and romantic place, the Robbers Glen. The name, the wildness of the place, its remoteness from human habitation, the rocky hill rising around us, the darkness of the night as it closed in upon us, and the solemn silence that pervaded, made the stoutest heart shudder. This glen lies between Bear River and Castle Rock.

This was the most God-forsaken country we had seen. Alkali everywhere. The water is warm and poor. Feed is scarce. A desolate place it is. To-night there is not a cheerful man in the train. Every gun is loaded. Extra men are put on guard, and but few retire.

Once during the night a false alarm was given, and one hundred and eighty men were ready for a conflict.

As the shades of night disappear and the rays of the morning sun light up the solitary place, the train rolls out of camp.

Many depredations were committed on the emigrants by the Mormons and Indians in this vicinity. In 1850 many emigrants were shot

down simply because they refused to give up their cattle and horses.

From Robbers Glen our route lay northwest to Castle Rock. Here we fail to find words to describe the beauty and grandeur of these rocks. Red, white, and gray granite piled upon each other until they formed great castles in the air, from which they take their name.

Fifty miles from Castle Rock a trail led northwest to Fort Hall on the old Oregon trail, while our trail led southwest to Goose Creek. The scenery down this creek was wild and romantic. The red granite rises perpendicular on either side six to seven hundred feet high.

James Tong, of Illinois, and George Price, of Virginia, two young men, resolved to stand upon the summit of the cliffs. Step by step they ascended the cliffs. The men below looked like six-year-old boys. Just as they reached the summit, they halted for a moment, dazed with the surprise at the depth below. They took a hurried view of the scene, and moved back from the precipice. For miles they walked along on this natural granite wall, until the sun was sinking low in the west, when they became anxious to find a place where they could descend; but to their horror the precipice grew more perpendicular and the descent more dangerous. Suffice to say it was

long after dark when they reached camp. Never did bacon and beans taste sweeter.

THE WEDDING.

It was here at this camp on Goose Creek, in 1853, the first wedding was celebrated on the plains. The story is as follows:—

The hardships, the toil, and privations endured while crossing the plains in those early days were no drawback to love-making, as the sequel of this story proves.

April 20, 1853, Isaac Decker, of Viraqua, Bodox County, Wisconsin, left home with an ox team for Council Bluffs, on the Missouri River. At the same time a wagon left Beetown, Grant County, Wisconsin, for California. With this wagon was a tall, handsome young lady of twenty, Miss Lavina Pond. In making up the train at Council Bluffs, the Decker and Pond wagons joined the same train. Isaac Decker and Miss Pond soon became intimate friends, and, strange as it may seem, when Miss Pond strolled on before, or lagged behind, Ike, as he was familiarly called, was always at her side, to protect her from the Indians (as he said). Days, weeks, and months passed, and when the train had reached Goose Creek, the Indians were hostile and on the war-path. Fortunately they did not catch Miss Pond, but Ike did, and there was rumor

of a wedding in the train, Indians or no Indians.

As this was the first marriage ever celebrated on the plains, the emigrants determined to honor the event with all the gaiety possible. To prepare for the wedding, the train must camp two days. What a hustling of the old ladies to prepare the wedding feast! for every emigrant camped within reach was invited.

August 4 was the sweetest morning of the whole journey across the plains. The sun shone with gentle radiance, and the motionless air was fragrant with the odor of sweet flowers. Men, women, and children, to the number of over two hundred, gathered around the camp to witness the ceremony.

The bride wore a dress of dark brown, figured nun's-veiling; her hair was combed over her head in coquettish curls, and she looked as sweet as only a young bride can. On the bank of the creek, beneath a canopy of willows and wild grape vines, the ceremony took place that made the twain one flesh. J. M. Robinson, justice of the peace, in a short, simple service, pronounced the young pioneers man and wife, while the birds in the willows sang their sweet songs. Many of the gentlemen claimed the privilege of saluting the bride, while not a few ladies kissed the groom.

The old, greasy wagon sheets were spread out on the ground for tablecloths, and the wedding dinner was served upon them. The menu was as follows: Bread, beans, roast duck, cake, and custard pie. The boys had found a duck's nest with fourteen eggs, and killed the duck; some of the cows gave milk, hence the custard pies.

Gathered around the wagon sheets were over forty guests, members of the newly-wedded couple's own train, seated on the ground, while the bride and groom sat at the head of the table, on an ox-yoke. Pots and dishes out of the way, the dance commenced, and lasted till the small hours of the morning.

Next morning six big Indians came to the camp. Ike looked savage, reached for his gun, and got between the Indians and his bride. A strange sensation tingled all over her at that moment, and she shuddered as if with sudden cold. The chief soon dispelled her fears, for in broken English he congratulated them on their big war-dance. The truth is, every Indian for five miles around had heard the racket, and could think of nothing but a war-dance. It struck terror to the redskins, and they troubled the train no more.

Mr. Decker and his bride arrived in California, and settled in Vaca Valley, where he died in 1864. Mrs. Decker is living in Dia-

mond, Alameda County. Mrs. Pond, mother of Mrs. Decker, is the only lady who has the credit of walking the entire distance, except a few miles, from the Missouri River to Ragtown, on the Carson River, fifteen hundred miles. She had a large family of eight children; the wagon was heavy and overloaded. The cattle soon became lame and poor, and Mrs. Pond resolved to walk, that the children might ride. A mother's love sustained her as she climbed the steep mountainside and walked through the burning sand and across the desert, that her children might not perish on the plains. She met her husband, who had gone to California in '50, at Ragtown, on Carson River. They arrived in California after six months' journey, and settled in Vaca Valley, where they lived many happy years. Both have paid the debt of nature years ago.

THE GOOD INDIANS.

The reader must not think that all the Indian tribes the emigrants of '49-'50 encountered were hostile and on the war-path. On the contrary, many of them were harmless, though natural-born thieves. The squaws were at every camp begging for bread. The old bucks wanted tobacco and whisky, and at the same time would steal everything they could carry off.

THE GOOD INDIAN.

Some of them were kind and hospitable, directing the emigrants to water and feed for their stock, while they divided their sumac, a kind of flour made of acorns, ground in a stone mortar by the squaws. They were also very liberal with their dried jerk, or buffalo meat. Some of the men were well dressed in buckskin and mounted on fine Indian ponies. It was a common thing to see them have fine mules and horses they had stolen from the emigrants. They would not sell them at any price.

Some of the tribes were at war with each other, and this made them more friendly with the emigrants.

From Goose Creek our trail led through hills of sand, covered with sage-brush and greasewood, to the headwaters of the Humboldt River.

For days not a living thing could be seen, not even a lizzard or horned toad. This is the most desolate region we have seen.

The hills were so bare and feed so scarce that thousands of cattle and horses gave out and starved to death. Hence wagons, clothing, and provisions must be left behind.

Some packed provisions on horses and cattle and led them. Others made carts, while some lost all their stock and must pack their provisions on their back, and, with rifle in

hand, journey on, leaving everything else behind.

The road was lined with men on half rations, while some were starving to death.

The writer saw twenty men in one day begging for something to eat.

It would be a great oversight to fail to record an incident that took place here.

A man from Salt Lake overtook us with twenty-five head of fat cattle. The starving emigrants offered him two hundred dollars for one ox. The Shylock refused to sell at any price.

The next morning twenty-five starving men, with rifles in hand, walked into his little herd and killed the best ox they could find. (The author ate a piece of it.) Then the Shylock offered to take one hundred dollars for the ox, but it was too late. He had played the wrong card.

July 25.—Not a cloud to be seen. The heat is intense. To-day we crossed the northeastern tributary of the Humboldt River. Our route now lies down the Humboldt, three hundred miles to the sink.

July 30.—Arrived at Thousand Spring Valley. Here in this plateau were many bottomless wells, the water flowing out over the land, forming a beautiful meadow, a real oasis in

Mr. J. N. B. Wyatt

this barren and sterile land. Here we camped three days to rest our cattle.

It seems strange, but it is a fact, for hundreds of miles around this beautiful meadow it is one vast desert of sand-hills, covered with sage-brush and grease-wood.

THE MAN THAT ATE THE BACON RIND.

August 1.—We camped in Hungry Hollow. It was near this camp, in 1850, that J. N. B. Wyatt ate the bacon rind.

There are but few men who crossed the plains who relate a sadder experience than Mr. Wyatt. The story, as told the writer by Mr. Wyatt, is as follows:—

On May 2, 1850, when in his nineteenth year, he left his father's home in Grundy County, Missouri, with an ox team, and joined a large train bound for the gold fields of California.

He crossed the Missouri River at St. Joseph, and took the trail leading up the south side of Platte River to the Rockies. Across the swollen streams, through storms of thunder and lightning, they pressed on. Days and weeks passed; nothing worthy of note transpired, until one morning, when they were camped on Platte River, a strange man on horseback, without hat or boots, rode into camp, almost breathless, with several Indian

arrows sticking in his back. A hostile Indian band had attacked his train, and he alone had escaped. He was given such relief as the camp afforded, and later started for Fort Laramie for aid.

June 10 they had camped for the day. The bright blue sky above, the broad, green prairie spread out before them as far as the eye could see. The faithful oxen, resting in the cool shade, puffing and chewing their cud. The men were happy and gay. But, alas, how soon a change came over them! The cholera made its appearance in the train, and many fell victims to the dread disease. Surrounded on every side by the cholera-afflicted emigrants, some became panic-stricken, and five wagons left the train.

The poor brutes were urged along at the rate of twenty-five to thirty miles per day, and the day's journey often extended far into the night, in the hopes of out-traveling the dreaded scourge. Many of the men, old and young, had been buried in lonely graves. Not until they had reached the mountains, and found cool, pure water, did the cholera disappear.

After enduring many hardships, they reached the Humboldt River. Cattle were lame, poor, and weak, wagons empty, and starvation staring them in the face. Thousands of miles from civilization, and not a morsel of

food in the wagons except a few pounds of dried apples and a little jerked meat. The men and cattle were reduced to skin and bone, and one man was sick in the wagon. Had they killed an ox, the animals were so poor they would have had nothing to eat but his hide.

For fourteen days they lived on dried apples and a small ration of jerked meat. During these days of suffering Mr. Wyatt saw a man throwing a bacon rind away. He grabbed it up like a hawk would a young chicken; he did not wait to cook it, either, but, like a starving wolf, he gnawed the meat off and then ate the rind.

On another occasion he visited a camp and wanted to buy something for a sick man to eat. A tall, raw-boned Shylock, in the form of a white woman, offered to sell one pound of flour for two dollars; he refused to pay, and chose hunger rather than to be robbed when they were starving.

In another camp he found an angel, in the form of a good old motherly soul, who gave him all he could eat, besides a generous donation to take to the camp.

About this time they were twice surrounded by Indians, who climbed into the wagons and threw out all the bedding and clothes. They found no provisions, but saw the men and cat-

tle were starving to death. Mr. Wyatt divided his dried apples with them, and they left. Soon after this they came to a trading post, where they bought flour and bacon at one dollar per pound. It has been fifty-two years since that time, still it makes the old pioneer hungry to think of the day he ate the bacon rind.

On September 15 Mr. Wyatt arrived at Coloma, the end of his journey, where gold was first discovered in 1848. Here he met his uncle, Thomas Thompson, who was the first Christian minister ever preached on the coast.

Mr. Wyatt witnessed the first baptism in California by a Christian minister, and he himself was the second one baptized. He is hale and hearty, though in his seventy-first year, and lives in Winters.

DOWN THE HUMBOLDT.

August 3.—The last three days we have been traveling through sand-hills covered with sage-brush. Feed is scarce, water poor and alkali. On either side of the road dead horses and oxen lie strewn everywhere. In this sterile desert one seldom meets with anything that has life, except an Indian. But to-day we saw four sage-hens, much like the prairie hens of the West, except the color, which was much like the sand-hills among which they live.

August 5.—We arrived at Mormon Station,

three hundred miles from Salt Lake. Here we found a few provisions for sale. Flour and bacon, two dollars per pound. Whisky, fifty cents per drink. Two emigrants got drunk and quarreled. Jim Ealy shot and killed Frank Sheppard. His brains were scattered over the ground when we arrived at the station. Both men were from Ohio.

From Mormon Station all along down the Humboldt the Indians were hostile and on the war-path. The mountains being in close proximity, and the river bank lined with willows, made it a favorable place for the Indians to attack and annoy the emigrants.

GRAVELLY FORD.

But few, if any, of the emigrants of '49-'50 can read of this ill-fated crossing with out calling to mind some depredation done by the savages in this vicinity. Many times the blood of the emigrants, as well as that of the Indians, mingled with the waters of the Humboldt, as it flowed on its course.

It was near this ford in 1852 that the Indians massacred a whole train of emigrants, men and women, carrying off six children, two boys and four girls.

In 1853 the writer visited the graves of the unfortunate emigrants. The wagons had all been hauled away by the traders.

THE HOPPER TRAIN.

It was here on the Humboldt, near Gravelly Ford, in 1856, that the Indians attacked the Hopper train, from Johnson County, Missouri, which consisted of twelve wagons, ninety-six head of work oxen, also ten head of milk cows, and twenty-five saddle horses. There were thirty men, twelve women, and ten children.

On May 8 they left their old homes and took the road for California, the land of sunshine and flowers.

Their route lay up the west side of the Missouri River, thence over the broad prairie and across the Kansas River, over the alkali plains to Fort Kearney, then up the south side of the Platte River.

April 5 they killed their first buffalo, about one-half mile from camp. Several of the women and children went out and saw it. The animal was dressed and brought to camp, and that night the meat was jerked.

Over the broad prairie covered with stunted grass they pushed on, following the emigrant trail up the south side of Platte River to Ash Hollow. Here they crossed the Platte and took the old Freemont trail for the gold fields.

There was no train that crossed the plains in 1856 better equipped than the Hopper train. Every man had a gun, and many of them were

the best of marksmen. Hence they killed many deer and buffalo, and the train was well supplied with fresh meat.

After many days of delay and hardships the train reached the Humboldt River.

August 1 had been a long and sultry day. The train had been traveling down the river. The banks were lined with willows. For miles they had seen Indians lurking in the brush.

Just as the sun was setting the train drove into camp. All hands were busy unhitching the cattle, when the redskins fired on the train, and shot William Hopper through the thigh and Harvey Pleasants in the groin. The little band of pioneers turned their old Kentucky rifles on the redskins, and they fled, going direct to Dr. Matthews' train that was camped near by, which was a horse and mule train. A pitched battle ensued, in which Dr. Matthews killed one Indian. At this the Indians fled, carrying the dead to the mountains. That night the air was filled with their wild and savage yells. In plain view the Indians piled brush and wood on the body of their dead comrade and burned it.

Next morning over fifty Indians, mounted on ponies, came swooping down from the mountains and attacked the Matthews train. Twenty men, with rifles, went from the Hopper train to their relief, and the Indians fled, though they succeeded in stampeding the stock,

and drove off fifteen head of mules and horses.

W. J. Pleasants, who crossed the plains in '49 with his father and brother Edward, headed a company of fifteen men, all well armed and mounted on good horses, and followed the fleeing Indians for fifteen miles over sand-hills and through the sage-brush, but failed to overtake them. The Indians were well mounted on Indian ponies, and armed with rifles, bows and arrows.

After eight days of delay, the Hopper train was able to move the young men who were wounded, and they soon recovered. Harvey Pleasants arrived in California, and lived with his father in Pleasants Valley, where he died August 1, 1866, just ten years to a day from the time he was wounded.

W. J. Pleasants lives in Pleasants Valley, where he has resided for more than fifty-three years. He still has the leather shot pouch and the old Kentucky rifles his father and he brought over in '49. He also has the bullet his brother Harvey was wounded with in 1856.

He has a beautiful and comfortable home in the heart of Pleasants Valley. (This valley was named after his father by the writer.)

THE LONG SWIM.

There were many little incidents that took place on the long journey of two thousand

W. J. Pleasants

miles, of which the following is one the writer will never forget:—

We were camped on the Humboldt River, and the morning was hot and sultry. As the sun rose above the mountain peaks, the train pulled out of camp. As it started, six young men,—Ike and Sam Harris, Green Teas, Cicero Dowd, Silvester Jones, and the writer, —put their clothes in the wagon and took to the water. The river was crooked, and the road led from bend to bend in the river. This made many cut-offs. We did not notice that the train was leaving the river, and before we knew it, the wagons were out of sight.

On and on, down the river we went. At times we left the water and ran along on the hot sand and gravel, but soon our fun began to grow serious. The train had taken a cut-off, and left the river. The heat was intense. The sun was almost blistering our backs, which were now as red as lobsters.

It was ten o'clock, and no train could be seen. We left the water and heeled it down the river through the willows, like so many wild men. One o'clock, and the train came in sight, but many miles away. In the willows we came upon a band of friendly Indians, who gave us old moccasins to put on our feet. At two o'clock, when the train came back to the river and camped, we were still two miles away. Two of our company on horseback

brought us our clothes. Our backs were so blistered we could scarcely wear our shirts. At six o'clock we were only twelve hours older, but many years wiser. The train had traveled only twelve miles, while we had traveled many more.

THE FIRST GOLD DUST.

August 10.—To-day we met six Mormons returning from California. The report they gave of the gold mines, and the gold dust they showed us, set every man wild to push on and reach the mines.

This was the first gold dust many of us had seen. Some of it was coarse, lumps as large as a man's thumb.

We forgot the hardships we had endured, and the difficulties yet to overcome before we reached the mines.

The cattle were so poor and weak we could only travel a few miles each day. Many of the emigrants became impatient, took what provisions they could carry, and struck out on foot for the mines. The road was lined with men rushing for the gold fields, traveling almost night and day.

We were then on the Humboldt River where the Humboldt cut-off from Salt Lake intersected the old Freemont trail, six hundred miles from the gold fields.

Mr. G. W. Seely

THE HERO OF 1857.

The fame of California, the wonderland, had spread far and near. It was said that far beyond the rolling prairies and over the snow-capped mountains lay the rich, fertile valleys of the golden West, a land of sunshine, where the climate was mild and salubrious. There the ever-blooming flowers filled the air with their sweet fragance. This garden of Eden was open for the hardy pioneers.

The writer is indebted to G. W. Seely for the following narrative:—

In 1857, in company with his brother Charles, wife, and three children; Flemming Brown, wife, and four children; Calib Etherton and wife; and John Fletcher, the hero of this story, they sold their comfortable homes in Jones County, Iowa, and joined the throng that was en route for the golden West. Little did they realize what was before them.

At Omaha they joined a large train, and with thousands of other emigrants took the road leading to the Pacific Coast.

The train was large and hard to manage. Ofttimes the wood and water were scarce, and no feed for the cattle.

After many weeks of wrangling and discontent, Seely and eight other men, with four wagons, pulled off and left the train.

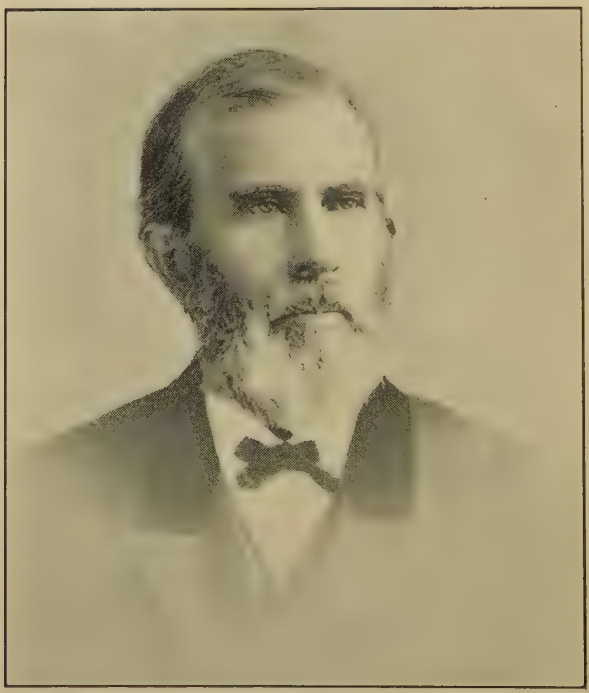
Night and day the little band kept guard

over the women and children. Day by day they trudged along through the cloudless sunshine. After many difficulties and hardships they reached Goose Creek.

July 28 they passed a camp where the Indians the night before had killed one woman and several mules and horses, and had driven the emigrants from the camp and plundered the wagons. They had ripped open the feather beds to get the ticking, and the feathers were scattered all over the ground for more than half a mile away.

The day had been a long, hot one. The sun was sinking to rest in a cloudless sky. The little band of pioneers had camped, and were preparing their evening meal, when a band of Indians, mounted on mules and horses, armed with rifles, bows and arrows, attacked the little train. The balls and arrows flew thick and fast. Many of them lodged in the wagons, behind which the women and children were taking refuge.

The scene was indescribable. The women and children were screaming and crying, the Indians yelling and crowding onto the train, when John Fletcher mounted his horse, and with a double-barreled shotgun loaded with buckshot dashed in among them, killing one mule and one Indian, and wounding several others. The Indians fled, carrying their dead comrade with them. Fletcher returned to



Mr. J. M. Robinson

camp, cool and deliberate. Not a scratch had he received, and he had saved the little band of pioneers.

They now hitched up their cattle and made tracks for a large train, and remained with them until they reached the wonderland.

Between starvation and the Indians stealing their cattle, they lost more than half of them, and left one wagon on the plains.

Mrs. Brown was taken sick on the Humboldt River, and died the day they reached their destination on the McCalama River.

George and Charles Seely settled near Dixon. In after years they moved to San Jose, where they have pleasant and beautiful homes.

THE BIG INDIAN.

July 10, 1853, was a beautiful morning. The sun shown bright and warm, and the air was fragrant with wild flowers. It was one of those beautiful mornings so often to be found in the wilderness.

No sound of the woodman's ax, no sign of life or civilization. It was the home of the red man, the savages of the forest. Here on the bank of a pure mountain stream stood a lonely pioneer wagon, and in it were Robert Dean and J. M. Robinson and wife.

They had camped for the night, and when morning dawned, not an ox could be found.

Robinson and Dean left Mrs. Robinson at camp and went in search of the cattle. Mrs. Robinson, busy with camp work, did not notice a band of sixty Indians creeping upon her. But, looking up suddenly, she saw a band of the largest Indians in the world within a few yards of her.

The old chief was a giant, at least seven feet high, or so it seemed to her. His head was decked with eagle feathers, and war paint on his face. With tomahawk and scalping-knife in hand, he walked up to her and motioned for her to get upon the wagon tongue and stand there. She obeyed orders. The Indians walked around the wagon and tent, saw no men, and then helped themselves to what they wanted, taking every pound of bread and sugar they could find, and then left.

When Robinson and Dean returned, the Indians were fleeing in the distance; Mrs. Robinson was still standing on the wagon tongue. How long she had been there she could not tell.

It has been forty-eight years since that day, but it still makes Mrs. Robinson shudder to think of it.

Mr. and Mrs. Robinson arrived in California after six months' journey, and settled in Vaca Valley, where Mr. Robinson died in 1898. Mrs. Robinson, still hale and hearty, lives on the old homestead.

Mrs. J. M. Robinson

SINK OF THE HUMBOLDT.

August 23.—We arrive at the sink of the river. It empties out on the desert, forming a great marsh or meadow of coarse grass, that covers more than a thousand acres. In many places the grass was higher than a man's head.

There were also many natural wells all over the marsh. Charles Durham, while hunting ducks, fell into one of them and lost his gun. Some of the wells had no bottom to them.

What a contrast between this beautiful meadow of waving grass and the sand-hills covered with sage-brush, over which we have been traveling for nearly a month.

Here we camped for three days to do our washing and let the cattle rest. While here we had a feast. A deer, pursued by a panther, or mountain lion, ran almost into our camp. Long before he caught it, we could hear the deer bleating as it ran for the bright camp-fire. When within a few rods of the camp, the panther caught it, and set up an unearthly growl, that sent a chill through every man. He ate the head and neck, and then gathered grass and leaves and covered the body up. The next morning we got the deer, and it was divided around the camp.

Before leaving the sink, every keg, jug, and bottle, in fact, everything, was filled with good, cold water. This we got by letting a jug down

deep into the wells, where the water was cool and good.

From the sink two trails led to the gold fields, one across the desert sixty-five miles northwest to Lassen River, the other southwest across the desert forty-five miles to Carson River. Our train took the latter trail.

THE LONE GRAVE.

In 1853, among the many thousands that sought a home on the Pacific Coast was William Snow, wife, and one child, Robert, five years old. They lived in Charleston, Cole County, Illinois. Snow's health having failed him, and hearing of the salubrious climate in California, so helpful to promoting health, he resolved to cross the continent, in hope of gaining his failing strength.

His outfit consisted of one yoke of oxen, also one yoke of cows, and a light emigrant wagon, into which he piled bedding, clothing, and provisions, and, with Mrs. Snow and child, on April 21 he left for the land of sunshine.

The out-door exercise, the change of scenery and diet and water all had a beneficial effect, and it renewed his strength and gave a buoyancy that made the hardships of camp life seem light. They joined a large train, crossed the Missouri River, and took the trail for the new Eldorado. With hope and joy Mrs.

Snow performed her daily task, picking up wood, bringing water, making fire, and preparing the meals, while Snow looked after the cattle. They had reached the barren, sandy plain. How slowly the train moved on day after day! The weary cattle dragged their heavy burden along. The feed was poor and scarce, and the train separated. Many of the cattle were giving out, and one of Snow's cows had died. And to lighten up the load, they threw away many things, while Mr. and Mrs. Snow walked. Pale and careworn, Snow could no longer do his share of camp work. The toil and hardships of the journey were too much for him; the road was steep and rocky, and he could no longer walk. Mrs. Snow, with a mother's love and a wife's devotion, took the whip and all day walked and drove the team. How she longed to reach the Sierra Mountains, hoping that the pure mountain air and the gentle sea breeze that fanned the sweet pine boughs would restore the color to her husband's faded cheeks. But, alas, she was doomed to disappointment. Snow's health paled from day to day, and he remained in the wagon with his little boy, while his devoted wife, with rifle in hand, went on duty to guard the cattle at night. It seemed that her troubles and trials had reached their climax. But not so. Her only child was ill; his thin cheeks, too, were pale, and his eyes, once so bright,

had lost their luster. Days and weeks had grown into months. Little Bob, as he was called, no longer ill, would trudge along by his mother's side, and, when his little legs could carry him no further, he would climb into the wagon.

They had now reached the Sierra Mountains, and drove into camp. It was one of those quiet, mellow evenings that seem to intensify the spirit of hope. So Mrs. Snow really felt that there could not possibly be any evil or sorrow lurking in the calm and beautiful hours as they passed slowly by. The wild roses rustled in the perfume-laden breeze, while myriads of fire-bugs flitted through the fast-approaching darkness. Long did she sit by the smouldering embers and listen to the hard breathing of him who was more dear to her than life. As the night wore away, the breathing grew weaker and weaker, but quicker and quicker grew the pulse. As the morning light lit up the deep, dark canyons, Snow's spirit took its flight. They wrapped him in his blanket and laid him to rest. Loving hands strewed the lonely grave with wild flowers, and with sorrowing hearts left the sad camp.

There ensued days of sorrow, toil, and hardships, in which no words can do adequate justice to the heroism and love of Mrs. Snow. After six long months of hardship, toil, and sorrow, Mrs. Snow and her little boy arrived

at Mud Springs. Little Bob is now known as Dr. Snow, and lives near Shingle Springs.

THE DESERT.

August 27.—We leave the meadow. At 4 p. m. we enter the desert. Not a spear of grass to be seen. Sand, nothing but sand, everywhere.

At 7 p. m. we halted to eat lunch and let the cattle rest. Lunch over, the train moved on. Darkness set in and swallowed up the trail. I shall never forget that night. There were five other trains crossing the desert the same night.

There was no moon, and the night was dark. Bonfires were made all along the trail out of wagons and vehicles left by emigrants who had gone on before. The light of the fires lit up our pathway and revealed the awful loss of stock.

I had become used to the sight of dead cattle, but the sights I saw that night were beyond description.

As the night wore away, the cattle began to give out, and we left our first wagon, and all the contents but the provisions. The cattle were so nearly exhausted they scarcely moved along. Twice during the night we gave them all the water we could spare.

Five wagons were left on the desert by our train.

As the gray streaks of a new day appeared in the east, we came to a traders' camp, where there was water for sale at one dollar per gallon.

A man by the name of Pain, from Illinois, had lost all his cattle but two. These two were drawing a cart, when one of them gave out for want of water. The trader told Pain one gallon of water would save the ox, but Pain flew into a rage, cursing him on general principles, and calling him all kinds of names. The trader bore the abuse for awhile, then drew his gun, and Pain cooled down, but refused to buy any water, and left his ox and cart.

We were then fifteen miles from Carson River. When we reached the river, we remained there one day. That night the trader came in off the desert with twenty head of cattle, and Pain's ox was with them. He had given them water and saved their lives.

No one can adequately describe the suffering of both man and beast. The scorching sun beamed down upon us from a cloudless sky. Glittering and burning sand at our feet, in which we sank five to six inches every step.

The loss of stock, horses, mules, cattle, wagons, and vehicles of all kinds, was beyond computing. When a team gave out, the wagon and the stock that could go no farther were put to one side of the trail. There was a

lane many miles long made by the wagons left on the desert. Just as far as the eye could see the desert was covered with dead horses and cattle, in many places eight and ten in a pile.

Here on the desert I saw the wagon I helped to build in McConnelsville, Ohio, for our company that left for California March 16, 1849. It was an immense wagon. The bed was made after the model of a skiff or yawl, with four oars, for ferrying the men and their provisions across the streams. There it stood, buried deep in the sand. The terrific winds that swept down over the great sandy plains had buried the wheels up to the hub. There was no mistaking the wagon. In the hind end of the wagon-bed, or boat, was the notch which had been made when they sawed out the board on which to record Hank Seamon's death, while on the side of the wagon-bed were inscribed with a red keel stone the names of Jerry Sheppard, Ambrose and William Palmer, August 29, 1849.

This was the third time I had seen trace of the company with which I had left my happy home, the men who left me sick at St. Joseph.

Long before we reached Carson River, at least five miles away, the cattle scented the water. Their eyes glared and rolled. Their tongues lolled out, and it was pitiful to see them straining every nerve to reach the water. It was with difficulty we kept them from rush-

"EACH HORSE CARRIED TWO HUNDRED POUNDS."

ing down over the bank into the river with the wagons. Many of them drank so much they could scarcely walk, and would not eat a bite for hours afterward.

HOW HOBSON RODE THE BUFFALO.

Years ago, when Texas was a wilderness, and the rendezvous of all classes of criminals, in the dense forest stood a lonely log cabin. This was the birthplace and early home of our hero, John Hobson. Here he had grown to manhood, with few associates except his own kith and kin, and but few playmates except the redskins of the forest.

Inured to hardships and dangers, he knew no fear. His bronco horse, lariat, and Mexican spurs were his greatest pride. With lariat in hand, and nothing but a hacamore on his bronco, he would mount the wildest steed.

In 1849, when news of the wonderful discovery of gold in California reached that lonely log cabin, John Hobson took the gold fever. He at once decided to seek his fortune in the gold fields of California.

Arthur Foster, Ciras Williams, and himself formed a party and cast their lots together. Their outfit consisted of nine mustang horses. On the backs of six of the broncos were rude pack saddles made from the forest. On these were piled the provisions, tent, bedding, clothing, and cooking utensils. Each horse carried

two hundred pounds. Each man was mounted on the swiftest horse he could find. With rifles in hand, and Mexican spurs dangling at their heels, they bade their loved ones adieu, and they were off for the new Eldorado.

They soon fell in company with other emigrants, and formed a large pack train, consisting of twenty-eight men and sixty-five Texas bronco horses.

It was March 20; the sun shone bright and clear, but the ground was full of frost. No grass for the stock, tired waiting for it to grow, they bought feed and horses to pack it, and took the Indian and buffalo trail leading to the west.

No one can adequately describe the privations and hardships the pioneer pack trains endured. The weather was fine, the trail good, and the horses fresh. Everything went lovely for a while, but it commenced to rain and hail. The streams were full from bank to bank. All day long they were wet to the skin, and they were compelled to camp. Many of the horses were poor and weak, and they had to throw away many things, among them flour, bacon, and beans. Their keg of old rye whisky for snake bite had been tapped, though it was too cold and wet for snakes. The gold fever began to abate. The men were cross and ill-natured. Every man wanted his own way, quarreling and wrangling night and day.

They had not traveled a month till ten men pulled off and left the train. For a few days peace prevailed, but soon others became dissatisfied, and after much quarreling the train divided again.

April 20 they had reached Wolf Creek, three hundred miles from the Missouri River. Arthur Williams' horse, while in pursuit of an antelope, fell, and broke Williams' leg just below the knee. They were now beset on every side by difficulty and danger. Every morning Williams was put on his horse, and they journeyed on.

It was May 10, one of those beautiful mornings so often to be found near the base of the mountain range. They had camped on Dead Man's Hollow. Here two men had been killed by the Indians, and were buried in one grave. At this point the train left the Platte River and entered the sand-hills. On a low plateau near the hills was a herd of buffalo grazing on bunch grass. The sun had just kissed the snow-capped mountains in the distance when the train left camp. They had scarcely gotten under way when John Hobson, Ezra Woodward, and six other young men started to kill a buffalo. The chase led them into the sand-hills, and the men were soon separated. Hobson, intent on killing his buffalo, kept in hot pursuit. Over the sand-hills, across the dry ravines, they sped on. Hobson fired several

shots at close range, still the buffalo sped on. Time and time again he threw his lariat, but it fell behind his game. His horse was now falling behind. The sun had risen high in the heavens when he gave up the chase. Not a buffalo nor man could be seen. He now tried to retrace his steps. All day he rode from hill to hill, but no train or trail could be found. The sun had set, night drew on, and like lightning the truth that he was lost flashed upon him. The air was intensely cold. With his hat drawn down over his eyes, and his threadbare coat drawn up under his chin, he sat all night long shivering with the cold. He dare not build a fire for fear of being discovered by the Indians. His horse was so thirsty he would not feed. When morning came, he once more started in search of the trail, leading his horse, which had become so weak for want of water he could scarcely get him to go. Up and down the sand-hills he plodded along. It was noon. His horse would go no farther, and he left him to perish. Every hour Hobson's situation was growing more serious. His canteen was nearly dry, and his jerked meat was almost gone. Just as the sun went down behind the black hills he killed a jack-rabbit, and broiled it on the coals made of buffalo chips.

For three days he wandered around in the hills almost famished. On the evening of the

third day he came to a pool of water. The sun was sinking low in the western horizon when up jumped a small buffalo calf. He fired, and it fell dead at his feet. Tired and hungry, he prepared to dress it and make his evening meal, when a great rumbling noise caused him to look up, and he saw in the distance a herd of a thousand buffalo bearing down upon him. They had been attracted by the scent of the blood. He had no time to run, and no place to which he could escape, except a small gulch near by. In this he took refuge. Almost instantly he was surrounded by the herd, crowding and goading each other. Death seemed inevitable. "Is this my end?" he thought in despair. He realized the almost hopeless predicament in which he was placed, for what man could hope to escape from being trodden to death.

It was a terrible situation, and, although it must have lasted less than ten minutes, to him it seemed interminable. One buffalo with long mane fell into the gulch near him. With one wild leap he lit upon the buffalo's back, and with a death-like grip he fastened his hands in his shaggy mane, clinging desperately to the buffalo.

With the bound of a tiger the animal leaped from the gulch, and with the speed of a reindeer he left the herd. In a moment more the loud report of a dozen rifles rang out on

the still, clear air, and the noble animal reeled and fell to the ground.

Hobson found his deliverers were a band of roving Indians. Patting him on the head, they called him "Great Brave." They cared for him tenderly, dividing their sumac with him.

During the day the Indians lay hid in the hills. They had been putting on the war paint, and one evening, as the sun sank behind the western hills, they left camp and, mounting their ponies, made for the valley below.

And in the stillness of the night they left their ponies and Hobson in five Indians' care, then silently crept away, and, with wild and hellish yells, they rushed upon what they seemed to think were their sleeping victims. The Indians had attacked an emigrant pack train.

The conflict was short and deadly. The chief was mortally wounded. Many of the braves were killed, and the rest broke and fled in wild confusion. Rushing for their ponies, wild with rage because they had been foiled, they shot Hobson; wounded and bleeding, they left him to his fate.

He was picked up by his victors and tenderly cared for. Imagine his surprise and joy to find in his deliverers his own company, with whom he had left his happy home so many weeks before.

Months, weeks, and years came and passed away. It was March, 1902, just fifty-three years since he had left, that John Hobson returned to the little log cabin in Texas. But, O, what a change had taken place! The old log cabin was gone, and in its place stood a beautiful frame house. But where were the loved ones?—Father and mother had long since been called home to their mansions above. Brothers and sisters were scattered up and down this cold and selfish world.

Everything was so sad and strange, he turned from the scene with an aching heart and returned to old Hangtown (now Placerville), California, where he met his old friend, Ciras Williams, after a separation of fifty-two years.

CARSON RIVER, OR RAGTOWN.

We had a picnic traveling up the river. At every camping-ground there was an abundance of dry wood, and plenty of bunch grass for the stock.

The stream was full of trout, and we had fish every day.

Carson River, like the Humboldt, flows out on the desert and sinks in the sand, forming a great meadow of thousands of acres, grown up with willows and bulrushes.

Ragtown was located on Carson River, three miles from the sink and forty-six miles

from the Humboldt meadow. It consisted of ten small tents, and one large one which was used as a trading post. All kinds of provisions were for sale, and whisky galore. Everything was one dollar per pound, except forty-rod whisky, which was twenty-five cents per drink.

Here we saw the first gambling-dens. This was the rendezvous of the thieves and gamblers who came out from California to fleece the emigrants.

I had my first and last experience in gambling here. Lucky Bill, a notorious gambler, ran a thimble game, and fleeced many a tenderfoot.

Jerry Gullion saw a chance to make fifty dollars. He had but one ox left, staked that on the game, and lost. Excited and strung up on forty-rod whisky, he bet his last dollar and five of mine. Again he lost, and that was the last of my money. From there to California he begged his way.

It was here Arthur Long was stung by a scorpion, and died in a few hours. This was the last death in our train until we reached Hangtown.

From Ragtown our route lay up Carson River to Rocky Canyon. Here we leave the valley and climb the Sierra Nevada Mountains. No road. Not even a trail. Rocks upon rocks, steep and rough. We thought we had seen

rough and rocky roads, but this was the worst we had found.

The mountains were steep, and we were forced to keep in the bed of the stream. The water had washed all the dirt away and left the bare rocks, over which we climbed for miles. It was a weary day for all of us. Where we left the canyon the mountainside was as steep as the roof of a house. Here we put eight yoke of cattle to one wagon, though it was almost empty.

Many of the cattle and wagons had to be pulled up over the rock for fifty feet with long ropes. It was also sidling, and it was with difficulty we kept the wagons from capsizing.

Our cattle, reduced to skin and bone, toiled slowly on and up the rough ascent. Sometimes the passage between the cliffs was so narrow our wagons could scarcely pass. Often we had to lift the wagons and oxen up over the rocks that lay across the path. Many of the rocks were four and five feet high, and extended across the entire width of the canyon, consequently it was difficult to pass. We only made eight miles in one day, and camped in the canyon.

Dishes and pots out of the way, the men gathered around the camp-fire to enjoy the scenery, for it is full of wild and picturesque beauty.

The cliffs on either side rise three and four

hundred feet high. The rough rocks and high cliffs were decorated with soft moss and trailing vines, and all the nooks were filled with maidenhair fern. Great pines lifted their proud heads high up into the starlight, while down at their base clustered the thickly-woven underbrush.

August 30, long before the sun lit up this wild and picturesque canyon, we broke camp.

At last we gained the summit of this outer wall, which seemed like one of nature's ramparts guarding the passage to the rich gold fields of California.

Here we camp for the night. We are on the first summit of the Sierras. We had some hard work to-day. Many large trees had fallen across our pathway. Rocks and dirt had fallen into the trail.

Supper over, the men group themselves, some reclining on ox yokes thrown on the ground, some standing, some sitting smoking. All are in high spirits and good humor, laughing and talking. Every pulse beats high, for to-morrow we are to climb the last summit, and then our route will be down grade.

THE PIONEER TRAIN OF '49.

March 3, 1849, was a cold, frosty morning. Beautiful icicles, more than ten inches long, hung from the eaves of the house, and the frost on the leafless shrubbery glistened and

MRS. GEORGE OLINGER

sparkled like diamonds in the bright morning sun, when George Olinger, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, put his little family, consisting of a wife and two children, into an emigrant wagon drawn by four yoke of oxen, and started for California.

At St. Joseph, on the Missouri River, he organized the pioneer train of twenty wagons, one hundred and sixty head of cattle, twenty head of cows, ten head of saddle horses, eighty men, three women, and Mr. Olinger's two little girls, one three years old, the other eighteen months.

On March 12, through slush and floating ice, they crossed the Missouri River on a flat-bottomed boat, for which they paid ten dollars per wagon, fifty cents per head for cattle and horses, while the men and women were ferried over free.

They took the buffalo and Indian trail leading to the west. A few pack trains had gone on before, but the snow and heavy rains had obliterated all their tracks. There was no feed for the stock, hence they hauled corn-meal to feed them. At every camp-ground at night they cut down cottonwood and willow trees for the cattle to browse on. By this means they kept the cattle in good condition until the grass grew.

When they reached the Rocky Mountains, they found many trappers and hunters, who,

with few exceptions, had Indian squaws for wives, and lived with the Indians in their wigwams; drinking, card playing, and shooting at the target were the height of their ambition. They had no Sunday, and scarcely knew the day of the month. They had no books or papers, and lived in perfect ignorance of the outside world. They were kind and hospitable to the pioneer train, telling them the names of the rivers and the distance between camping-grounds, also where they could find feed and water for their cattle.

The hardships and difficulties encountered by this pioneer train in its pass over the Rocky Mountains can not be described. Not a stone or a shovelful of dirt had ever been moved to make a road. They must climb the steep and rocky mountainside where there was not even a trail, then down into the rocky canyons where a buffalo or elk could scarcely go, in many instances cutting down trees and chaining them to the hind ends of the wagons to keep them from turning end over end into the rushing stream below, which they must cross without a boat.

On some occasions they made rafts; on others they used their wagon-beds for boats.

Like many of the other trains, their wagons were too heavy and overloaded, hence they threw away many things, including bacon, flour, and other articles.

When they reached Fort Laramie, the sight of the fort was hailed with joy. No wonder Mr. Olinger's little babe clapped its tiny hands with joy, and pointed its finger toward the fort, crying, "Ouse, ouse!" for the child was just learning to talk.

This little girl, who had beautiful auburn hair, was the cause of much fear and apprehension during the entire journey. The Indians took a great fancy to the child, always pointing to her auburn curls and red morocco shoes. Many times did they want to trade Indian beads and moccasins for the child. On one occasion a band of Indians followed the train for three days, endeavoring to make a trade. At last they offered several ponies and many strings of beads for the sweet child, and when they found they could not get it, they placed many strings of beads around its neck and gave it a little pair of moccasins beautifully worked with red and white beads, and after much pow-wowing they left. After that her mother never let her out of sight when the Indians were near.

July 4 they camped on Buffalo Creek. Every man had a pie made of the buffalo berries which grew along the banks of the creek, and from which it derived its name. The next morning more than a score of them were actually foundered on buffalo berries.

On July 20 a favorite ox was sick, and they

gave it water and feed and left it to die. The second day, after camping for the night, the ox came lowing and running into camp. The poor, sick ox had followed the trail of the train two days and nights, and traveled over fifty miles. That ox finally reached California, and when fat sold for two hundred dollars.

September 12 they camped at the fated camp-ground of the Donner party. The ground was strewn with the bones of the cattle, horses, and dogs the ill-fated party had killed to sustain their own lives while snowbound in the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Many of the stumps of the trees they had cut down for wood were fifteen to twenty feet high, indicating that the snow had fallen to that depth.

Mr. Olinger and his little family arrived in California on September 16, and settled near Vacaville. In after years they moved to Vallejo, where Mr. Olinger died in 1872. Mrs. Olinger, now in her eighty-fourth year, lives in Vallejo. She still has the Bible she read a chapter in every day while crossing the plains. She is a faithful Methodist, and no one can make her believe that the constant reading of the Word of God and faith in Christ did not have something to do with keeping the Indians from molesting the train. It was the rule and custom to let the train rest in camp over Sunday, when it was possible to do so, and many

a pleasant and happy Sabbath day they spent while crossing the plains. The little girl with auburn curls is now Mrs. Hodgkenson, who also lives in Vallejo.

SUMMIT OF THE SIERRAS.

We had some hard climbing to reach the summit of the snow-capped mountain. It is impossible for one to have any idea what we had to pass through and over to-day, without actual experience or a visit to this wild and rocky canyon.

At last we reached the summit and camped. All were tired and weary, but every heart beat with joy.

We were now nearer heaven than we ever had been before. A beautiful spring of icy water gushed and bubbled from the rocks, beneath a bank of snow ten feet deep.

Overhead the stars glitter and sparkle like diamonds in the blue canopy of heaven.

The tall, graceful pines that cover the mountainside sang their sweet songs of health as the gentle sea breeze swept through their boughs.

Stretching away to the west, lying at our feet, was the rich, fertile valley of the golden West, while far beyond was the rockbound shore of the Pacific Ocean.

September 3.—The sun rose bright and clear, looking out from his cloudless throne in

the heavens, kissing the glittering mountain peaks and sparkling vales, for ice had formed on all the shrubbery during the night. The dewdrops glistened and sparkled like myriads of diamonds for a moment, and then vanished away.

It was one of those early September mornings, the most beautiful of all in these snow-capped mountains. The morning air, fresh from the sun-kissed snow-banks and sweet with the scent of the pines and hemlocks, was filled with sweet fragrance.

Last night we camped on the summit of the Sierras. Great night for all of us it was. After bacon and beans, with rich, strong coffee to wash them down, we lingered around the dying camp-fire and spun long yarns about our adventures.

This is the highest altitude the emigrant train passes over, ten thousand feet above the level of the sea. In the distance, and spread out before us like a great panorama, lay the gold fields of California.

To-day the train takes a dip, and descends rapidly into the valley below, three hundred miles to the Pacific Ocean. Every heart is filled with new hope. We are on the down grade to the gold fields. The wagons are almost empty. Though the cattle are poor and weak, we go down hill at a lively rate.

The water is good and cold. Provisions are

plentiful since we passed Ragtown. There we bought flour, bacon, coffee, and sugar at one dollar per pound. Feed is good, and all are happy.

Only two sick men in the train,—James Bryant and William Fisher. Bryant came from Eddyville, Iowa. We have hauled him nearly three months. He was taken sick at Green River. In helping to swim the cattle across, he took a chill, and has been sick in the wagon ever since. Not one murmur from him, though his hip bones had worn through the skin. At Ragtown a trader gave him some medicine, and he finally recovered after he arrived in California.

A PATHETIC STORY.

North of the pass in the cliffs and rocks is the fated camp of the Donner party. It consisted of one hundred and thirty souls, of whom over one hundred died of starvation in the winter of 1846 and 1847.

The story, as related by George Donner, the youngest of the Donner family, is sad in the extreme. In outline it is as follows:—

The Donner party had made an effort to cross the mountains, and was overtaken by storms. Snow fell in many places twenty to thirty feet deep. Several of the party lost their lives trying to find their way out. When the

snow melted, their remains were found scattered all over the mountainside.

Days, weeks, and months passed, and still the storm held the party snowbound.

They saw their provisions fading away. First on half rations, then just enough to sustain life. The last ox and horse had been killed, then their faithful dogs, and, lastly, they boiled the old ox and horse hides, and were living on them when they were rescued.

Had it not been for a sad affair which took place in the Donner train before they were snowbound, the entire train, without doubt, would have perished.

Some time before they were caught in the storm, a man by the name of Reed had quarreled with one of the party, and killed him. For this he was driven from the train, to starve in the wilderness. He made his way over the mountains to some settlement.

After waiting anxiously for days and weeks for the train to arrive, and still it came not, Reed spread the news that the train was probably snowbound. He organized a rescuing party. At the same time John A. Sutter organized one, and there was one organized at Vallejo also.

In this party was one Jack Tucker, who now lives in Napa City. All of the rescuing parties made their way into the mountains of snow and ice. After days and weeks of toil

and hardship, the Donner party was located.

Now came the herculean task of getting the starving emigrants out of the snow. Horses and mules could not go through the snow, hence they must be left at the base of the mountain. The rescuing party had to carry provisions on their backs to the surviving emigrants.

When one of the rescuing party left with provisions for the Donner party, they were so near gone when he arrived at the camp that he had but little to give the starving women and children, and, after dividing with them, he had but little with which to sustain life on the outward journey.

The women and children had to be carried out, for they were too weak to walk.

All honor to Reed, for it is said that his own wife and child were the last that he helped to carry from the starving camp. While carrying his child out, he saw that it was starving. He had a sack which had contained flour, and this he wet and gave to the child to suck, which saved its life.

Whole chapters, yes, whole books, might be written on the sufferings of and heroic efforts to save the starving emigrants. But to tell of one will give the reader a faint idea of the hardships and sufferings the rescuing parties endured.

Jack Tucker, who was with the party that

left Vallejo, was so near starving that he chewed and ate his buckskin pants off up to his knees.

George Donner, the youngest of the Donner family, lived near Winters for many years. He died in Santa Rosa. His half brother, Sol Hook, lived in Winters and died there.

September 8.—We camped on the western slope of the Sierra Mountains and the eastern line of California. The mountains are steep

and rough, covered with heavy timber and underbrush.

This is the home of the California lion and grizzly bear. Dan Snider, while on guard, was attacked by a large bear. A death struggle ensued. Snider rammed a double-barreled shotgun into the bear's mouth and pulled both

triggers. Two loads of buckshot went crashing through his head, ending the fight in Snider's favor. (The author ate a piece of the bear.)

September 10.—It is almost impossible to realize that we have passed the last summit and are now on the down grade.

No words can adequately express the joy of an emigrant train of sunburnt, ragged, and dusty men when they know that they are on the downward grade to the gold fields of California. I shall never forget the day we passed over the last summit.

September 11.—To-day one of the wagons capsized and rolled down the mountainside, dragging three yoke of oxen with it. They lodged a hundred feet below against the trees, and three of the oxen were killed. William Fisher was sick in the wagon, but escaped with only a few bruises. The wagon was left lodged against the tree.

THE LONE WAGON.

Andrew McClorey, of Winters, is the only man who has the honor of crossing the plains alone in '49 with a single wagon. At St. Joseph he bought his outfit, consisting of three yoke of cattle, a light wagon, and one saddle mule, and provisions for one year. He refused to join a train, and with his cousin, William McClorey, he launched out into the wilder-

ness with a lone wagon. He defied the redskins, and they looked upon them as great braves. For over one thousand miles they traveled alone. Many nights, when they camped, they were surrounded by the Indians, who did not molest them.

On the headwaters of the Humboldt they overtook a train from Illinois. Mr. McClorey had known the captain in the Mexican War, and to him he gave his wagon and oxen, and, in company with three other men,—Cob Davenport, John Brassfield, and Tom Bassford,—they struck out on foot for Sutter's Fort.

On August 8 they camped at the old sawmill where gold was first discovered in 1847.

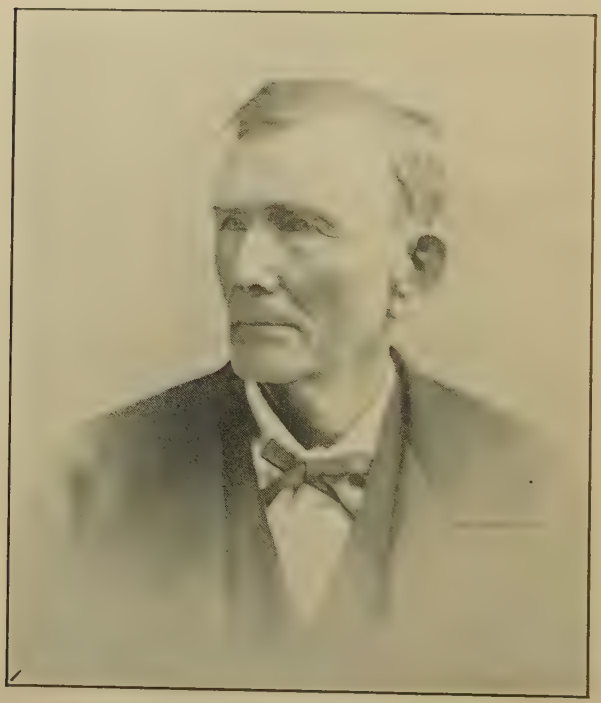
Mr. McClorey looked upon the whole journey as a picnic. The old pioneer now lives in Winters, where he settled many years ago.

THE BOYS WHO HAD THE GOLD FEVER.

Among the many thousand who left their happy homes and turned their faces toward the setting sun in 1849, in search of the gold fields of California, was J. M. Pleasants, of Warren County, Missouri, and his two boys, William and Edward.

William was in his sixteenth year, while Edward was only a mere lad.

When the news of the wonderful discovery of gold in California reached that happy



J. M. Pleasants

home, Mr. Pleasants and his two boys took the gold fever. The pleadings and prayers of loved ones fell on deaf ears, and they soon prepared to seek their fortunes in the land of gold.

Mr. Pleasants, then in the prime of life, resolved to be among the first to reach the gold fields. In an old thimble-skein wagon, with hickory poles for bows, over which was drawn common muslin for a cover, they piled blankets, clothes, and provisions enough to last them six months, while their old Kentucky rifles, shot pouch, and powder horns were securely fastened to the bows.

On April 16, with four yoke of young cattle, two milk cows, and one saddle horse, a light wagon, and a well-selected outfit, they bade adieu to loved ones and civilization, and joined the pioneers in one mad rush for the gold fields.

April 18 they joined a large train that took the Indian and buffalo trail leading to the west, up the south side of Platte River.

The wild and desolate land, the ever-changing scenery, the thousands of buffalo and elk and antelope that crossed their path, filled their young hearts with joy. With what pleasure they pursued the wild game over the broad prairie and sand-hills!

Days and weeks had passed, and nothing had transpired to mar the pleasure of their

young hearts. But, alas, a sad gloom fell over the entire train long before they reached Ash Hollow, four hundred miles from the Missouri River. The cholera made its appearance in the train, and claimed John Coleman as its first victim. They had scarcely left the fresh-made grave when the dreaded scourge claimed Edwin Roe as another victim.

The heat was intense, water poor, and men sick in almost every wagon. The train was almost panic-stricken. Nearly every day the cholera claimed a victim, until ten of their comrades had been left in lonely graves—no, not lonely graves, for other trains buried their comrades by their sides. Not till they reached the mountains, with cool nights and pure, cold water, did the scourge leave the train.

Their cattle young, the wagon light and not overloaded, they were able to be among the pioneer wagons, hence they found wood, water, and feed for their cattle in abundance.

The Indians were friendly, and in many instances aided them in finding feed and water for the cattle.

Their greatest difficulty was in crossing the rapid streams and following the rough and crooked trail up and over the rough mountain-side, for many trees and rocks had fallen across their pathway.

On many of the rapid streams there was no boat except a few Indian canoes, which were

lashed together with long poles and the wagons and provisions taken over, while the cattle and horses swam across the stream.

The train, which consisted of twenty-six wagons and one hundred men, was well organized, and perfect harmony prevailed during the entire trip.

Many little incidents and mishaps transpired, but after five months of toil and hardships they arrived at Bidwell's Bar, on Feather River, and, like thousands of other emigrants, tried their luck at mining, but were not successful in finding a rich mine. Tired and disgusted with the mines, early in 1850 they made their way to Solano County, and located in what is now known as Pleasants Valley, in the very heart of the rich and early fruit belt.

During the winter of 1850 Mr. Pleasants and his two boys spent their time in hunting, killing deer, elk, and bear, which they packed to Sacramento on mules, selling it for twenty-five to fifty cents per pound. Some of the bear would tip the scales at four to five hundred pounds, thus bringing from seventy-five to one hundred dollars per bear.

For over fifty years Mr. Pleasants resided in Pleasants Valley, though visiting the home of his youth several times. At the ripe old age of ninety-one he passed over to the land from whence no traveler ever returns.

W. J. Pleasants, the oldest boy of whom we

write, still lives on the old homestead, while Edward lives in Orange County, California.

HOW JOHN REED KILLED HIS BEAR.

The writer is indebted to James Lovejoy, a comrade of Reed's while crossing the plains in 1849, for the following thrilling story, told in his own words:—

September 14.—We had camped for the night. Our oxen were tied to the trees. Supper was over, and we were still chatting around the camp-fire, while the smouldering embers were burning low.

It was one of those still, clear nigts, which are so often found in the mountain gorges. The moon shown dimly, throwing the long shadows of the stately pines across the trackless forest. The air had become deathly still. Hark! what is that? Evidently a California lion is creeping upon our cattle. The moon had gone down. The stars were shut out by the dense forest and underbrush, and it had become intensely dark. We could not see a rod away. With rifle in hand we awaited the approach of the lion. He set up a most unearthly growl, and seized one of the oxen. We could hear him breaking the bones of his prey, and yet we had no notion of interrupting him.

Hours passed. The coyotes were gathering around, snarling and fighting, but dared not

approach. Suddenly they left. Not fifty yards away came a grizzly bear crashing through the brush, making straight for the lion and ox. It was evident there would be a conflict between them. The woods echoed with their savage growling. We waited, but not calmly, for the result. The lion, though not half the size of the bear, defended his prey with such courage and skill that old bruin soon found his match, and was compelled to retire.

He discovered the other oxen tied to the trees, and made for them. They plunged and bellowed, but the bear soon laid one of them low, and on it gorged himself.

Hours now seemed days to us. How we longed for the light of another day! Tired and weary with watching, we fell into a doze. As day dawned, John Reed roused from his slumber, and, seeing our noble and faithful ox, that had helped to drag our wagon across the plains and over the snow-capped mountains for two thousand miles, lying dead, he resolved to kill that bear or lose his life in the attempt.

He quietly crept from his comrades, and, with rifle in hand, started on the bear's trail.

Was General Jackson ever in a rage, Reed was more so. But how soon he was to bitterly repent of his folly! His imprudent and wild rage led him on and on. For miles Reed followed on the bear's trail, suddenly coming upon him. The bear rushed at him with open

mouth. Reed fired, making a flesh wound; this only increased the bear's fury. Reed was forced to flee for his life. Dropping his gun, he climbed a small tree, but not in time to escape the bear's claws. The bear seized Reed by one leg, but fortunately his boot pulled off, and the bear went crashing to the ground, taking with him Reed's boot and pants.

Reed now climbed to the topmost branch. Time and time again did old bruin endeavor to reach him, but, the tree being small, the bear was obliged to give it up. The bear walked around the tree, taking a survey of things. He then flew at the tree, endeavoring to tear it down. The sun was sinking low in the western horizon. Still old bruin held his post.

Reed's situation was now becoming critical, for at every gust of wind, which had risen, the tree would swing to and fro. The wind increased to a gale, and Reed saw the tree must soon go, and with it he must fall into the very jaws of death.

The bear evidently knew Reed must soon come to the ground, for he watched him with the eagerness of a cat, ready to pounce upon its prey.

The wind had increased to a hurricane, and the tree came crashing to the ground. Without pants or boots, Reed struck out for dear life, with the bear close at his heels. At every

jump he could feel the warm breath of the bear, so close was he upon him.

Reed's strength was failing fast, and could hold out but a little longer, when the loud report of three rifles rang out upon the clear mountain air.

After anxiously waiting and watching for Reed to return, Ike Harris, Bob Smith, and William Boyer took the bear's trail in search of Reed. Mile after mile they crept through the underbrush. Just as they came out into the open timber, Reed and the bear came rushing toward them. They fired, and old bruin fell dead at their feet. Reed gave a sigh of relief to know he was saved from old bruin's claws.

THE BURNT WAGON.

In Marion County, Iowa, in 1853, on the broad prairie, stood a lonely cabin, the home of Silas Brown and James Tong. Before the door stood an emigrant wagon and four yoke of restless oxen. With busy hands they piled bed and bedding into the wagon. All things ready, Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Tong, with her babe, took their seats in the wagon that was to be their home for six months. Little did they dream of the hardships that awaited them. Brown cracked his long whip, and the oxen started with their heavy load for the gold fields.

At St. Joseph, Missouri, they joined a large

train of twenty-eight wagons, one hundred and twelve men, six women, and three children, two hundred and twenty-four oxen, and two cows. They also had ten head of saddle horses.

June 25.—Feed was scarce, cattle were poor, and many of them lame and giving out. Brown and Tong left the large train and camped by themselves, in hopes that their cattle might get more feed.

July 4, 1853, was a lovely morning. No booming of the cannon. No sign of civilization. Not a sound could be heard in that vast wilderness, except the whistling of the mocking-bird and the twitter of the little sparrows at the approach of a new day.

It was still dark when Brown and Tong went in search of their cattle, but no cattle could be found. The large train, that was camped in sight, pulled out and left them. They soon found the trail where the Indians had driven their cattle off. Brown and Tong left the women at camp and went in pursuit of the Indians.

The women, tired and weary of waiting for the men to return, went to hunt berries, of which there were many on the banks of the creek. They had not left the wagon far when they saw the blue smoke curling up and a band of Indians dancing around the burning wagon

and tent. Trembling with fear, they crawled into the brush with the babe, and hid.

Higher and higher rose the sun, and the heat was intense. They were nearly famished for water and food, but they dare not move lest they be discovered by the red devils. The sun was sinking low in the western horizon when, trembling with fear, and almost famished for water, they crawled out from their hiding-place. In the distance they saw their husbands returning without an ox. They met the men at the camp, where all was in ashes, and not a morsel of food or a stitch of clothing was left, except what they had on their backs, not a blanket to keep out the cold night air.

They took the babe in their arms and started on the trail to overtake the train. Over the rough, rocky road, through the deep sand, and up and down the steep hills, they trudged along, carrying their precious burden. It had cried itself to sleep begging for something to eat.

The sun had gone down behind the snow-capped mountains, and the bright, full moon had arisen, throwing the shadow of the tall, stately pines across the trackless forest. The shades of night had set in. Still weary and faint for want of food, they trudged along. Hark! 'tis the sound of voices. "Indians! Indians!" the women exclaimed. With a mother's love, Mrs. Tong hugged her babe to her

throbbing heart. They stopped in the trail, the men with rifles in hand, awaiting the approach of the enemy. Nearer and nearer they came, when the voice of a white man fell on their ears. Then went up a shout of joy, for it was two men on horseback from their own train, with food and water for their unfortunate companions.

The women and babe were taken on the horse, and at the dawn of day they reached the camp of the large train, and were saved.

THE CAMP-FIRE.

The most pleasant part of the trip across the plains in '49-'50 was around the camp-fire. Supper over, dishes and pots out of the way, we would gather around the camp-fire and relate the scenes of the day, and spin long yarns.

Some played the violin, others the accordeon. A few would play cards, while the young men would sing their favorite California songs:—

It rained all night, the day I left,
The weather, it was dry.
The sun so hot, I froze to death,
Susanna, don't you cry.

Chorus:—
O Susanna,
Don't you cry for me,
I'm going to California,
Some gold dust for to see.

I had a dream the other night,
When everything was still;

I dreamed I saw Susanna, dear,
A-coming down the hill.
Chorus.

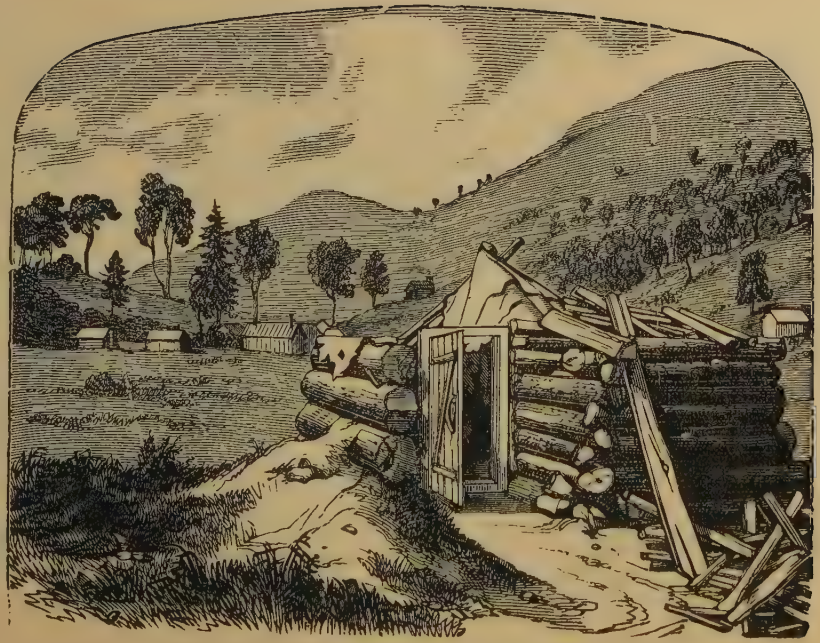
The buckwheat cake was in her mouth,
The tear stood in her eye,
And all that I could say to her
Was, Susanna don't you cry.
Chorus.

Though there were many pleasant and happy hours in camp, there were times when every heart was filled with sorrow.

July 20 had been a long and weary day. Tired with the toils of the day, the entire train had sought rest—no, not all, for there was one who found no rest. Uncle Tobin, as he was called by all, lay suffering in his tent. He was taken sick on the Platte River, seven hundred miles behind. For weeks we had hauled him over the rough and rocky road, and not a murmur escaped his lips. The small hours of the night drew on. Lying in my tent, I could hear him offer up his feeble prayer and in low accents sing his favorite song:—

On the other side of Jordan,
In the sweet fields of Eden,
Where the tree of Life is blooming
There is rest for me.

Poor old soul, that was his last song on earth, for, when the morning dawned, his spirit had taken flight. We wrapped him in his blankets and laid him away. We gathered



LOG CABIN OF '49 CRUSHED BY THE SNOW.

wild flowers and strewed them on his grave, for we all had learned to love Uncle Tobin.

September 15, 1850.—To-day we passed the first mining camp. The old log cabin of '49 has been crushed by the heavy snow. Near by stands the new trading post, made of shakes. In this camp the writer did his first day's work in the mines, and found one piece of gold worth eight dollars. This piece of gold he carried to Ohio, thence to Iowa, then back to California. Then, in 1854, his wife sold it to buy bread for her oldest child.

In after years this camp was known as Johnson ranch.

Three miles from this camp, in 1850, the Indians took two men, John Tuttle and James Deaner, laid them on a log, and cut them up by joints, and left them lying on the log. Two days afterward the writer saw twenty-one Indians in one pile, that the miners had killed in revenge.

ONLY THREE MEALS.

The most amusing feature of the trip across the plains in '49-'50 was the cooking. The outfit of cooking utensils when we got through was not elaborate,—one iron pot, one skillet or Dutch oven, in which we baked bread, one coffee-pot, and a teapot to each wagon. All the other pots, kettles, and pans had been thrown away. As a rule, there were four men

COOKING FLAP-JACKS.

to the wagon. John got the wood and started the fire; Dick fetched the water; Ben looked after the cattle; Frank got supper,—fried bacon, cooked flapjacks, and made tea.

It took an expert to cook flapjacks. When one side was done, they were flipped up in the air and lit in the pan the cooked side up.

For breakfast, hot biscuit, made with cold water and saleratus, fried bacon, and coffee. Dinner, cold bread or crackers, with cold meat or raw bacon. Sundays we had boiled beans and dumplings, and on special occasions we had a pot of boiled rice with sugar on it.

September 16.—We arrived at Hangtown, the end of our journey. It is a long lane that has no end.

So we found the trail that led to California. After six months of toil and harships, across the dreary and sandy plains, through the hostile tribes of Indians, up the steep and rocky mountainside, across the raging streams, over the burning desert, through the snow-capped mountains, and down the steep and rocky canyons.

We camped at old Hangtown, two thousand miles from the Missouri River. Sunburned, ragged, and dusty. The cattle poor and lean, wagons empty, provisions gone. We sold the cattle for two hundred dollars per yoke, wagons from fifty to one hundred dollars each,

HANGTOWN.

rifles and shotguns for from ten to twenty dollars.

At Hangtown we found every nationality under the sun represented.

The mountains and canyons were full of gold hunters. A few were making their fortunes, while thousands of them were only making a living. In my pioneer mining days many amusing incidents occurred, but this one I deem worthy of recording, as it illustrates how we longed to see a white woman. It was in the winter of 1850. We were mining on the north fork of Weaver Creek, twenty-five miles east of old Hangtown, where Three-finger Jack was hanged in 1849. It was Saturday; the snow had been falling nearly all day, when Sam Hit came into camp with the joyful news that a white woman had come to Snow's camp, sixteen miles away. Next morning I put on my best jeans pants, my mother had made, a pair of alligator boots that I gave an ounce of gold dust for ($18), a red flannel shirt that cost me four dollars, my old wool hat, lopped down over my ears. I struck out on foot to see the wonderful creature, a white woman. When I arrived at Snow's camp, it was late in the day, and as Mrs. Snow kept a restaurant, I ordered dinner, at $1.50. While eating, I saw some eggs in a pan. On inquiry, I learned they were worth one dollar each, so

I ordered one cooked. This brought my dinner up to $2.50.

It was dark long before I reached home. I had a long, weary walk over a steep mountain trail, and, should I live to be a hundred years old, I shall never forget the day I walked sixteen miles to see a white woman in California.

After four years of toil in the mines, I settled in Pleasants Valley. I have borne my share of pioneer life; the time is near when there will be no survivors of the pioneers of '49-'50. But few are left to tell the tale. And now my story is ended. If I have been successful in conveying to the reader a little of the hardships, the toils, and privations the pioneers of '49-'50 endured, then I shall be completely rewarded for my labor.

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